Final Report

Evergreen School
"Safe Routes to School" Study

Prepared For:

City of Kalispell

Montana Department of Transportation

Kalispell, Montana

Prepared By:

Robert Peccia & Associates

Helena and Kalispell, Montana

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Chapter 1 Project Introduction & Public Outreach

1.1 Introduction, Current Efforts & Program Recommendations

Introduction

The decision to prepare a *Safe Routes to School (SRTS)* study for the Evergreen Schools was made in September, 2006. At that time, considerable public contact was made to both Flathead County and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) regarding safety issues near the Evergreen Junior High School as it pertains to speeds and traffic volumes along LaSalle Road. The various public contact consisted of both formal contact (i.e. from Evergreen Community Partners) and informal contact (i.e. concerned parents). The various public interest was expressed to elected officials, appointed officials, and County and school district personnel.

As a result of this input from the public, and the recent authorization of the formal Safe Routes to School program in the Federal transportation bill (SAFETEA-LU), the MDT undertook a school specific *SRTS* study. The development of this study, coupled with the recommendations to improve student safety, are the primary subject matter included within this report. It is the hope and desire of the MDT, and the author, that this short yet succinct report will serve as a blueprint for improving student safety at the Evergreen Schools over the coming years. The general work tasks that were identified as necessary for completion of this document are as follows:

Task 1: Data Collection
Task 2: Project Interviews
Task 3: Infrastructure Phase
Task 4: PTA Outreach
Task 5: Preliminary Recommendations Phase
Task 6: Final Recommendations Phase
Task 7: Miscellaneous Document Production
Task 8: Public Outreach Activities

Current Efforts

During the development of this SRTS study, some formal SRTS efforts have been completed by the Evergreen School District. The Evergreen School District Superintendent submitted a SRTS grant application for infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects. The District has subsequently been awarded a grant and contracts are being developed. At the elementary school, individual teachers perform a minor amount of safety instruction with younger children (how to cross the street, STOP-LOOK-LISTEN, etc.), however there is a lack of a formal program. Perhaps the greatest effort for student safety education is undertaken by local law enforcement officials as conditions allow. Special presentations by law enforcement "resource officers" have sometimes been geared towards pedestrian and bicycle safety, however again a formal program is lacking. Because of this, there are substantial gaps in what is being done without a "formal" SRTS program, and what potential exists for implementing a true SRTS program that relies on the five E's (described later).

Certainly, there is a great potential to implement an educational component to teach children the correct ways to interact while walking and bicycling to school. Coupled with this is the instruction of parents that interact on school grounds and neighborhood streets. Stepping up law enforcement activities, and visibility, will also serve to heightened safety awareness. Lastly, traditional engineering approaches to improve conditions cannot be overlooked.

All of the general themes noted above will serve to improve the substantial gaps between a formal program and the current state of student safety measures being incorporated in the schools.

Program Recommendations

The development of this SRTS study was completed with considerable community participation in terms of time, knowledge and logistics. It is the intent of this SRTS document to present this effort, and portray the conclusions and recommendations made to ensure student safety is improved over the foreseeable future. **Chapter 4** of this document contains the listing of recommendations, which are a mixture of both "infrastructure" and "non-infrastructure" projects. The identified projects were developed in concert with the community through the SRTS workshop (described later), and reflect the programs that have the best chance of being implemented and that do not exhibit any fatal flaws.

To incorporate a true SRTS program for the school, it will be necessary to follow several defined steps. As active participants in the PTO and School District change, the mechanism must be in place such that the Evergreen Schools SRTS program can continue. Procedural items to ensure continued success of the SRTS program are as noted below:

Finding Partners for SRTS Projects

Implementing the Evergreen Schools SRTS plan will be a collective effort and requires that partnerships be established with various SRTS stakeholders to combine efforts for maximum efficiency and effectiveness. Parents, school officials, local government officials, law enforcement personnel and other stakeholders should be contacted to inform them of the proposed improvements, and short-term and long-term priorities, as well as how they can help your SRTS efforts. It will be crucial that a "champion" be identified in the community to undertake this effort. The recently completed Safe Routes to School (SRTS) State Guidebook offers excellent ideas in chapter 3 to help communities coordinate this important effort.

Establishing Implementation Responsibilities

The Evergreen Schools SRTS Team must be an advocate for the activities and projects presented in **Chapter 4** and may be able to help secure the resources needed for SRTS actions. However, implementing the activities or projects will likely be the responsibility individual teachers, the school board, the Evergreen Community Partners / Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), or Flathead County.

Finding Funding Sources

Finding funds for SRTS activities and projects will be an ongoing effort that requires cooperation of various stakeholders and government agencies. As discussed in **Chapter 5**, funding SRTS involves matching identified needs with grant programs, securing safety funds from schools or local governments, seeking contributions of funds or services from organizations or private donors, or even holding your own fundraising events. There is no easy and quick way to find funding sources for SRTS. It takes considerable time and effort to find funding sources so it's important not to get discouraged if you come up short.

Setting a Timeframe for Actions

The timeframe required to accomplish the recommendations presented in **Chapter 4** will vary and depend on project priorities and the ability to find partners and the necessary funding. Generally, the improvements requiring the least amount of time and resources should be completed first, and those that require the most should be completed later as resources allow.

Sustaining SRTS

Implementing projects and activities to meet all of the Evergreen Schools SRTS objectives may take many years to complete. Therefore, it is critical to sustain energy and interest in the program over the long term, particularly as members of the SRTS Team, school administrators, and local decision makers change.
The most effective way to accomplish this is to build a broad base of support within the community and focus on small successes. Some other ideas to keep the Evergreen Schools SRTS program going include:

- Identify additional program champions. A Principal and/or teacher at the school who champions the program - he or she will be able to sustain the program over a long period.

- Publicize your activities and successes. Get visibility for activities through local media and school communications and publicize your activities. Making the work fun and positive helps ensure people will want to continue working on SRTS and may encourage others to become involved. Ask to frequently make reports at local school board or parent group meetings.

- Encourage policy changes. You may be able to realize long-lasting positive effects by working together with your school, school district or local government to establish policies that support children walking and bicycling to school.

- Consider creating a permanent SRTS Team. A permanent SRTS team within your local PTA, school board, or pedestrian safety group means that SRTS will continue to receive attention and energy.

- Keep children involved. Children can be effective campaigners and initiators as evidenced by their successful involvement with past antismoking and recycling campaigns.

- Involve Parents. Without parental support, nothing really changes. Speaking and meeting with other parent groups will provide you with ideas you might like to try in your community; it can also give your project team some necessary inspiration and support.

- Empower your SRTS Team. Make sure you have the right players on the team who can help with access to information or the media, who know about funding sources, and who understand the process required to develop and implement physical improvements.

- Finding and keeping volunteers. Finding volunteers is easier if the program is arranged so that volunteers are required immediately before and after school. Offer child care as a way to encourage volunteers. Organize your efforts so volunteer commitments require only short, manageable obligations. Spend time with volunteers and provide some SRTS training. Training increases the commitment a volunteer feels towards the project, reduces turnover, and strengthens your program.

- Recognize when outside help is needed. Some projects may require specialized help (like traffic engineers) to analyze situations and develop appropriate solutions. This could require entering into professional service contracts to get the work done. School Boards or local government have the staff and expertise necessary to draft and execute such contracts.

- Be persistent! Some of your ideas or recommendations may take some time and education to generate the necessary support.

It is recommended that the infrastructure and non-infrastructure programs described and presented in this document (**Chapter 4**) be viewed as desirable and beneficial, and that the community strive for implementation of the various aspects presented therein. To continually monitor the progress and features of the program, it is recommended that the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) be the chief architect to monitor the program over the years. As people move out of the PTO group, new volunteers will move in. Making available the SRTS document to the PTO will ensure a "running record" of the SRTS development, and offer criteria and guidance to continue on with the program

1.2 School Statistics

The Evergreen School District administers the two subject schools analyzed as part of this study. These schools are the Evergreen School (5th thru 8th grades) and the East Evergreen Elementary School (kindergarten thru 4th grades). These schools are shown on **Figure 1-1** in relation to each other and the surrounding community. The following enrollment statistics, depicted in **Table 1-1**, are noted as per the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) for the school year of 2005-2006. This is the most recent full school year for which data is available to the public:

Table 1-1
Evergreen School District Enrollment Statistics (2005-2006 School Year)

School / Grade	Male Students	Female Students	Total Students
East Evergreen Elementary School			
Kindergarten	44	36	80
1st Grade	38	34	72
2nd Grade	45	54	99
3rd Grade	29	43	72
4th Grade	49	40	89
Evergreen School			
5th Grade	45	37	82
6th Grade	48	47	95
7th Grade	44	49	93
8th Grade	50	37	87

As can be seen from the data in **Table 1-1**, the following enrollment figures are noted for each of the two schools:

East Evergreen Elementary School:	412 students
Evergreen School:	357 students
Total Enrollment:	769 students

USGS AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH (DOQQ) OBTAINED FROM THE MONTANA STATE LIBRARY, NATURAL RESOURCE INFORMATION SYSTEM, HELENA, MONTANA

FIGURE 1-1

VICINITY MAP

ROBERT PECCIA & ASSOCIATES
825 Custer Ave, Helena
100 Cooperative Way, Ste. 200, Kalispell
Civil, Environmental, and Transportation Engineers and Land Surveyors

ROBERT PECCIA & ASSOCIATES - TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

EVERGREEN SCHOOLS
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS) STUDY

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1.3 School and Public Outreach

An important component of this SRTS study was an extensive public outreach program to those most affected by safety issues in and around the school site. This aggressive public outreach was completed primarily during the months of October and November, 2006. The public outreach included the following activities:

- Interviews with select parties;
- Outreach to the Evergreen School Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO);
- Outreach to the Evergreen Business Owners & Property Owners Association Presentation;
- Outreach to the Evergreen School District; and
- General outreach to interested parents, students and teachers.

Each of the above is more fully explained on the following pages.

Interviews with Select Parties

Several project interviews were made with various parties in the community. The purpose of the interviews was to gather information from appropriate entities, and to thus allow the Consultant to gain as much knowledge as possible from nearby residents and businesses. Through the scope of work developed for the project, the following parties were identified for interviews:

- School District Superintendent;
- Evergreen School Principal;
- Local Law Enforcement (Flathead County Sheriff's Office);
- State Law Enforcement (Montana Highway Patrol);
- School Crossing Guard(s);
- School Identified Students;
- Darla Harmon (Concerned Parent);
- Individuals working in businesses directly east of school, and
- Others.

<u>Interview Number 1</u>

Ms. Kim Anderson
Principal, West Evergreen School (5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades)
18 West Evergreen Drive
(406) 751-1131

- Ninety (90) percent of the issues are on Evergreen Drive.
- No sidewalks – we tell kids to walk on south side of Evergreen Drive, but once away from school there is no way to check.
- Many of the students ride their bikes.
- A great deal of economic diversity in the surrounding neighborhoods.

- About eighty (80) percent of the students qualify for the free lunch program (unheard of by most standards).
- No busing at the school – all students come from within a three-mile radius of the school (Montana State statute).
- CTEP project will build bike path along East Evergreen Drive.
- All comes down to transportation issues along Evergreen Drive – need better infrastructure and speed control.
- Some parents drop the older kids off at East Evergreen School and they walk/ride bikes to West Evergreen Schools – on the roads.

Interview Number 2

Mr. Al Gilbertson
President, Evergreen Business Owners & Property Owners Association
(406) 257-6866

- Speeds along LaSalle Road create an unsafe condition.
- Evergreen as a whole has very poor infrastructure.
- Drainage along LaSalle Road is extremely poor and water ponds up throughout the Evergreen area.
- Need pedestrian facilities along Evergreen Drive.
- His group is concerned about school issues and general safety issues.
- Business access is important.

Interview Number 3

Ms. Darla Harmon
Evergreen Schools Parent-Teacher Organization & Evergreen Community Partners, Inc.
(406) 752-3255

- We need better pedestrian features around the Evergreen Schools (sidewalks, bike paths, etc.).
- Vehicles speed on LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive.
- The kids walk and bike on Evergreen Drive, which is extremely unsafe – there is no room on the roadway.
- We need separated bike paths. The CTEP project will help, but it has been a long time coming.
- Crossing LaSalle Road is difficult – especially when accidents occur at the intersection. The light helps when the crossing guard is there.
- Traffic circulation in general is difficult around the Evergreen Schools along LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive.
- The neighborhoods in general have poor access and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Glad that something is finally being done with the initiation of this study.

Interview Number 4

Ms. Linda DeVoe
Principal, East Evergreen School (PK-4th grades)
18 West Evergreen Drive
(406) 751-1121

- Evergreen Drive is the main issue – too narrow, kids walk 3 or 4 abreast, not always in the grassy ditch.
- Kids ride their bikes in the roadway – limited shoulder.
- CTEP project will drastically help this situation – from LaSalle Road to East Evergreen ES on north side.
- There is a bridge on Evergreen Drive that the kids have to cross – becomes very narrow, but they do have concrete barriers separating them from the vehicles which is safer than nothing.
- Parents are a problem in how they drop kids off and where they drop kids off.
- The East Evergreen ES has a great parking lot and good traffic circulation (although there is some drainage ponding in one location of the parking lot).
- There is no busing at the school – everyone lives within a three mile radius
- Only crossing guard is at LaSalle Road.
- There was an accident there last week – very concerning to parents when this happens.
- LaSalle Road is a truck route? The road has a lot of trucks on it at times.
- Perception that speeding is a huge issue. Wonders why there is not a special speed zone along Evergreen Drive and also LaSalle Road. Says it is 45 mph along LaSalle Road – way too fast (Note: actually drops to 35 mph though).
- The new traffic signal at Shady Lane and MT 35 has been very beneficial for kids crossing at that location. There is no infrastructure, however, to get kids to the school.

Interview Number 5

Mr. Joel Voytoski
Superintendent, Evergreen School District 50
18 West Evergreen Drive
(406) 751-1111

- Main concern is LaSalle Road – too much traffic, speeds are huge, travel patterns have elevated drastically over the years.
- There are no sidewalks or suitable pedestrian crossings in Evergreen as a whole – very unsafe for kids!
- His belief is that the school district has done about as much as they can to control issues at LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive – it's now in the hands of others.
- The East Evergreen Elementary School lot and vehicle circulation works great. The West Evergreen lot needs improvement. As such, the District has purchased

some adjacent land for teacher parking, which will free up area for better vehicle circulation.
- Believes that there needs to be well-lit, identified pedestrian crossings in the community, especially along Evergreen Drive, along with the infrastructure to support it. May want to consider pedestrian activated flashers and/or designated stop lights.

Interview Number 6

Mr. Mike Mehan
Undersheriff, Flathead County Sheriff's Department
800 South Main
(406) 758-5585

- Mike has attended about four meetings in the past at the PTO and the Evergreen Business Owners Association
- Really feels the biggest issues are along Evergreen Drive – constantly hears about "lack of sidewalks" and "lack of pedestrian crossings".
- He says they were successful in getting the speeds lowered on LaSalle Road, during school hours, from 45 mph to 35 mph. Some people think it should be 25 mph.
- He has a designated officer assigned to the Evergreen Schools and has him there 5 days a week during the morning. If he has time, he also monitors speeds during the afternoon. The officer jumps between LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive
- Starting January, 2007, they will have a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) assigned to the Evergreen Schools, which will help increase their presence.
- Does not remember any fatalities or pedestrian crashes ever occurring at the intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive. There has been some injury crashes however.

Interview Number 7

Ms. Jeannie Cook
Operations Supervisor, Glacier Bank
Intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive (SE Quadrant)
(406) 756-4200

- Supports anything that will increase student safety.
- Because of a lack of sidewalks, kids do "cut-thru" the Glacier Bank parking lot on occasion. A few years ago a kid was running through the lot and a customer backed up and accidentally clipped the student. No severe injuries though.
- Really feels that there should be a southbound designated left-turn arrow from LaSalle Road onto East Evergreen Drive.
- It is hard to take "left-outs" from many of the businesses along LaSalle Road, especially during peak travel times and when school gets out.

- A lot of traffic on East Evergreen Drive during school drop-off and pick-up periods.

Interview Number 8

Mr. Kurt Rau
Pastor, Calvary Lutheran Church
Intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive (NW Quadrant)
(406) 752-4102

- His house and church are directly across from the Junior High School.
- They had issues two years ago with people using their parking lot as a "cut-thru" to avoid the signalized intersection.
- They had a near accident with a "cut-thru" vehicle almost hitting their pre-school kids. The church does provide a basic, half day pre-school for children of several parishioners.
- Since then, they have gated off their approach on LaSalle Road and have never opened it back up. This has taken care of all the "cut-thru" issues.
- Their access is along West Evergreen Drive and is very wide.
- They want to support the school anyway they can.
- Their facility is identified as an "emergency refuge" during any school related crisis. They had a drill a few weeks ago where the school students were relocated to the church to simulate an emergency event. The kids did not cross at the signal, but rather went right across the roadway (i.e. West Evergreen Drive).
- They consider themselves to be a partner with the school and are more than willing to help in any way they can as the study unfolds.
- Definitely need sidewalks along West Evergreen Drive.

Interview Number 9

Ms. Crystal Shue
Crossing Guard, West Evergreen School
Intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive (Southwest Corner)
(406) 751-1131

- Has been a crossing guard at the intersection for ten years.
- Biggest issue are vehicles trying to beat the red lights.
- There are a lot of trucks (especially logging), but they are actually very good. They know the kids are here, and they don't speed like the cars. Also, they honk if they aren't going to be able to brake in time for the light to give her some advance warning.
- She'd like to see pedestrian "countdown timers" on the light poles so she would have an idea how much time is left at the signal.
- She is on the southwest corner of the intersection (i.e. near the school), and vehicles on Evergreen Drive, heading eastbound, routinely cut across the curb

fillets and ramp laydowns (note – this happened several times while we were at the intersection and she had to move the kids back accordingly).
- Evergreen Drive itself does not match up on both sides of the street, which causes confusion with drivers trying to weave in and out of the area.
- On Evergreen Drive (eastbound) there is only one lane. However, right-turning vehicles onto LaSalle Road behave like there are two lanes, which makes it difficult for the driver to make the maneuver and not end up driving on the curb.
- She feels designated left-turn bays on both Evergreen Drive approaches, and lining up the approaches, would help the drivers out and eliminate some of the erratic driving at the intersection.
- Also, speeds are an issue (i.e. getting LaSalle Road traffic slowed down before the intersection).
- There are usually more kids during the afternoon than the morning. She is at the intersection for one hour during each period.

Interview Number 10

Sergeant Jerry Ren
Trooper, Montana State Highway Patrol
(406) 471-6133

- Does not get too many complaints on speeding along LaSalle Road - most issues he hears about are on Evergreen Drive.
- Evergreen Drive is posted at 25 mph, but people almost always drive around 35 mph. He feels the nature of the roadway makes people think it is a "thru-corridor".
- The two Evergreen Schools will be his formally "adopted" schools in the next month or so. By this he means that he will spend one day a week at the school, will give safety talks once or twice a year, will meet with the principal monthly, and will be more active. This is in addition to what the Flathead County Sheriff's Department will be doing through their program.
- Is willing to participate in any way he can to further the study along.

Interview Number 11

Ms. Danette Mitchell
Crossing Guard, West Evergreen School
Intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive (Northeast Corner)
(406) 751-1131

- Estimates about 50 – 60 kids walk on a nice day during the afternoon. More in the afternoon than the morning.
- During cold weather, it drops off significantly.
- The road crews do a good job of plowing the roadways.
- She tries to get all the kids to walk on the north side of East Evergreen Drive. The older kids usually ignore her though.

- She doesn't feel there is much speeding on Evergreen Drive, but rather LaSalle Road does seem to be an issue.
- A lot of the vehicles try to run the yellow light and end up getting caught in the red phase.
- Only accidents she's witnessed have been rear end "fender benders" on LaSalle Road.

Miscellaneous Student Comments

Due to privacy concerns pertinent to recording actual student names and contact information, informal questions were asked of several students while waiting with the crossing guards at the intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive. Approximately fifteen students were queried for their perceptions of safety at the intersection and in the area in general. Extracting precise responses was difficult, however most responses can be summarized as noted below:

- There is just too much traffic.
- It's too noisy to hear people.
- We have to walk in the road.
- It's hard to ride our bikes.

Outreach to Evergreen Schools Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

A public outreach activity was held on Tuesday, October 17th, 2006, for the "Safe Routes to School" study. The meeting coincided with the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Evergreen Schools "Parent-Teacher Organization". The meeting began at 6:30 p.m. and concluded at approximately 8:30 p.m. The meeting was held in the Board Room of the Evergreen School's Administration building, and was attended by about 45 members of the community. Sign-in sheets were passed around, which recorded approximately 31 individuals, however it was estimated another 10 to 15 individuals (including the consultant team and others) did not sign-in.

The meeting began with Darla Harmon making introductions and thanking people for attending. Darla is the Evergreen Community Partners Chairwoman, and has been an active advocate for this project. Ms. Harmon introduced the Montana Department of Transportation Director, Jim Lynch, to say a few words before beginning the formal presentation. Director Lynch talked about the Safe Routes to School program, how pleased he is that MDT is having a direct involvement in this study, and how the community should be engaged over this issue. He further went on to state that one of his personal directives has been to conduct more outreach to the various communities in the state, and as such was pleased to be attending the Evergreen Schools meeting.

After Director Lynch concluded his comments, Ms. Harmon then introduced Jeff Key, project manager for this project from Robert Peccia & Associates. Mr. Key proceeded with a formal power point presentation to the audience (included in these minutes at the end of the comment portion), followed by a "question and answer" session. Note that brief meeting minutes, along with a copy of the *powerpoint* presentation, are included in **Appendix A** to this report.

Outreach to the Evergreen Business Owners & Property Owners Association

A public outreach activity was held on Tuesday, October 24th, 2006, for the "Safe Routes to School" study. The meeting coincided with the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the "Evergreen Business Owners & Property Owners Association". The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. and concluded at approximately 9:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Community Room at the Evergreen Fire Hall and was attended by about 20 members of the community. Sign-in sheets were passed around, which recorded approximately 15 individuals, however it was estimated another 5 individuals (including the consultant team and others) did not sign-in.

The meeting began with Darla Harmon making introductions and thanking people for attending. Darla is the Evergreen Community Partners Chairwoman, and has been an active advocate for this project. Ms. Harmon introduced the project before Jeff Key gave a formal presentation. Mr. Key proceeded with a formal power point presentation to the audience (included in these minutes at the end of the comment portion), followed by a "question and answer" session. Issues and comments made from the meeting attendees, both during and after the formal presentation, are as noted in **Appendix B**.

Evergreen Schools Safe Routes to School Workshop

A "Safe Routes to School" workshop was held the evening of Monday, November 13th, 2006, for the "Safe Routes to School" study. The meeting was held in the Administration Building's gymnasium. The meeting began at 4:00 p.m. and concluded at approximately 7:30 p.m. The workshop was attended by about 30 members of the community. Sign-in sheets were passed around, which recorded 25 individuals, however it was estimated another 5 individuals did not sign-in.

The meeting began with Jeff Key asking participants to introduce themselves and relay what they hoped to accomplish at the workshop. This was followed by Mr. Key delivering a 30-minute presentation about the program, the SRTS process, and the purpose of the workshop (presentation attached herein). At that time, the participants were asked to break out into groups of three, four or five to brainstorm problem areas and ideas. Full size aerials and large flip chart paper was provided, along with markers, to record each groups ideas. As this occurred, the consultant team walked around the room and offered suggestions and/or answered questions.

At the conclusion of this brainstorming exercise, each group was asked to stand up in front of the crowd to explain their group's findings and recommendations. There were no "right or wrong" ideas, and the exercise was a positive one in that all participants were engaged and active throughout the workshop.

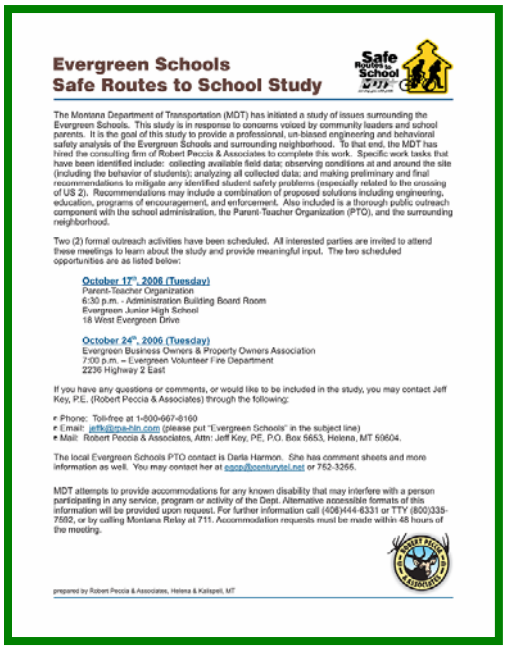
The workshop conclusion resulted in Mr. Key going around the room one last time one-by-one and asking participants that of all the ideas generated, what would be there top three priorities to improve student safety. The question was also posed as to whether their initial hopes and objectives stated at the beginning of the workshop had been met by the end of the workshop. The meeting minutes for this workshop are as shown in **Appendix C** to this report.

Miscellaneous Public and Agency Coordination

During the course of this study, miscellaneous outreach activities were held in conjunction with the ongoing *Kalispell Area Transportation Plan (2006 Update)* project. For that particular project, several status presentations were made that included two (2) public informational meetings, one City Council work session, and one City Planning Board regularly scheduled meeting. All of these presentations had a *Safe Routes to School* component to them focusing on the study being undertaken at the Evergreen Schools.

News Releases

Television and newspaper articles were used several times during the planning process to help keep the public informed. These news releases generally were issued prior to the primary public outreach activities to generate interest in the process and to encourage participation by the public.



Evergreen Schools
Safe Routes to School Study

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has initiated a study of issues surrounding the Evergreen Schools. This study is in response to concerns voiced by community leaders and school parents. It is the goal of this study to provide a professional, un-biased engineering and behavioral safety analysis of the Evergreen Schools and surrounding neighborhood. To that end, the MDT has hired the consulting firm of Robert Peccia & Associates to complete this work. Specific work tasks that have been identified include: collecting available field data; observing conditions at and around the site (including the behavior of students); analyzing all collected data; and making preliminary and final recommendations to mitigate any identified student safety problems (especially related to the crossing of US 2). Recommendations may include a combination of proposed solutions including engineering, education, programs of encouragement, and enforcement. Also included is a thorough public outreach component with the school administration, the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), and the surrounding neighborhood.

Two (2) formal outreach activities have been scheduled. All interested parties are invited to attend these meetings to learn about the study and provide meaningful input. The two scheduled opportunities are as listed below:

October 17th, 2006 (Tuesday)
Parent-Teacher Organization
6:30 p.m. - Administration Building Board Room
Evergreen Junior High School
18 West Evergreen Drive

October 24th, 2006 (Tuesday)
Evergreen Business Owners & Property Owners Association
7:00 p.m. – Evergreen Volunteer Fire Department
2236 Highway 2 East

If you have any questions or comments, or would like to be included in the study, you may contact Jeff Key, P.E. (Robert Peccia & Associates) through the following:

- Phone: Toll-free at 1-800-667-8160
- E-mail: jeffk@rpa-hln.com (please put "Evergreen Schools" in the subject line)
- Mail: Robert Peccia & Associates, Attn: Jeff Key, P.E., P.O. Box 5653, Helena, MT 59604.

The local Evergreen Schools PTO contact is Darla Harmon. She has comment sheets and more information as well. You may contact her at eapp@centurytel.net or 752-3265.

MDT attempts to provide accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person participating in any service, program or activity of the Dept. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request. For further information call (406)444-6331 or TTY (800)335-7592, or by calling Montana Relay at 711. Accommodation requests must be made within 48 hours of the meeting.

prepared by Robert Peccia & Associates, Helena & Kalispell, MT

Summary of SRTS Meetings

Table 1-2 shows the various public outreach activities undertaken for this SRTS study. Meeting minutes were prepared for all of these activities and are available on request from the MDT and/or the Consultant.

Table 1-2
SRTS Coordination Meetings

Date	Agency or Individual
08/04/06	MDT Safe Routes to School Implementation Team Meeting
09/14/06	Public Information Meeting #1 (Museum at Central School) *
10/17/06	Evergreen Community Partners/Parent-Teacher Organization Safe Routes to School Meeting
10/24/06	Evergreen Business Owners & Property Owners Association Presentation
10/25/06	Evergreen School District Board Meeting
11/13/06	Evergreen Schools SRTS Workshop
12/11/06	Kalispell City Council Work Session (City Hall) *
12/12/06	Kalispell City Planning Board Regular Meeting (City Hall) *
12/13/06	Public Information Meeting #2 (Museum at Central School) *
06/05/07	Evergreen Community Partners/Parent-Teacher Organization Presentation

* Held in conjunction with the *Kalispell Area Transportation Plan (2006 Update)* project.

Chapter 2
Existing Data Collection & Analysis

Chapter 2 Existing Data Collection and Analysis

2.1 Introduction

An initial step at the beginning of the Evergreen Schools *Safe Routes to School (SRTS)* study was to collect a basic amount of travel data along LaSalle Road, near the West Evergreen School (located south of Evergreen Drive and west of LaSalle Road). Typical data that was collected included the following:

- Bi-directional vehicle volumes;
- Vehicle speeds;
- Vehicle composition (i.e. type); and
- Crash statistics.

For comparison purposes, the above listed data was collected along LaSalle Road both before the school year started, and after the school year started, to gauge what differences may be encountered along the roadway.

As determined during the scoping process, the above data was collected along LaSalle Road only. This is important to recognize because many of the issues that have been brought out to date for the project have been primarily along West and East Evergreen Drive. No engineering data has been collected and/or recorded along these facilities.

2.2 Travel Speeds and Volumes

Table 2-1 shows the observed travel speeds and volumes along LaSalle Road near the West Evergreen School. The posted speed limit in this location is 45 mph, although during school drop-off and pick-up times the limit changes to 35 mph on LaSalle Road. It is interesting to note that the northbound speeds generally dropped after the school year began, while southbound speeds increased slightly. This is especially evident for the 85th percentile speeds. Before the school year started, the 85th percentile speeds along LaSalle Road in the northbound direction was 48.1 mph, while after the school year started this dropped to 44.7 mph. This is based on the combination of all readings. The drop in 85th percentile speeds is likely the result of the special school speed limit of 35 mph being in place, and reinforced with flashers, during school drop-off and pick-up periods. Also note that **Table 2-1** presents data for the entire 24-hour period that data was collected both before the school year began and after the school year started. **Table 2-2** and **Table 2-3** depicts the corresponding data for the one-hour morning drop-off period and the one-hour afternoon pick-up period only. The 85th percentile speeds drop correspondingly during those time periods, when compared against those in **Table 2-1**, due to the change in the posted speed limit from 45 mph to 35 mph during school drop-off and pick-up times.

Total volumes along the corridor along LaSalle Road were recorded to be 22,705 vpd before the school year started, and 21,084 vpd after the school year started.

Table 2-1
Travel Speeds & Volumes (24-hour period)
LaSalle Road (US Highway 2)

Location	Posted Speed (mph)	Average Speed (mph)	85th Percentile Speed (mph)	Volume
LaSalle Road (Before the School Year Started)				
Northbound	45	41.1	48.1	11,805
Southbound	45	40.1	46.2	10,900
LaSalle Road (After the School Year Started)				
Northbound	45	38.8	44.7	10,879
Southbound	45	40.7	47.2	10,205

Table 2-2
Travel Speeds & Volumes (Peak School Hours Before the School Year Began)
LaSalle Road (US Highway 2)

Location	Posted Speed (mph)	Average Speed (mph)	85th Percentile Speed (mph)	Volume
LaSalle Road (8:15 am - 9:15 am)				
Northbound	45	41.1	47.9	572
Southbound	45	40.5	46.9	635
LaSalle Road (2:45 pm - 3:45 pm)				
Northbound	45	38.9	46.0	827
Southbound	45	38.5	44.2	764

Table 2-3
Travel Speeds & Volumes (Peak School Hours After the School Year Began)
LaSalle Road (US Highway 2)

Location	Posted Speed (mph)	Average Speed (mph)	85th Percentile Speed (mph)	Volume
LaSalle Road (8:15 am - 9:15 am)				
Northbound	35	37.6	43.7	579
Southbound	35	39.5	44.9	656
LaSalle Road (2:45 pm - 3:45 pm)				
Northbound	35	35.9	42.1	727
Southbound	35	38.3	43.5	727

2.3 Pedestrian & Bicycle Volume Observations

Field observations were completed at the intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive on a sunny day after the school year started. The purpose of the field observations were to record pedestrian and bicycle volumes at the intersection, view activities away from the intersection, and observe the interaction of vehicles with the school pedestrians and bicyclists. Observations were made during both the school's AM peak hour time period (**Table 2-4**), and the PM peak hour time period (**Table 2-5**). The following data was recorded.

Table 2-4
AM Peak Time Period – Pedestrian & Bicycle Observations
Intersection of LaSalle Road & Evergreen Drive

Leg of Intersection	Number of Pedestrian Crossings	Number of Bicycle Crossings
North Leg	0	0
South Leg	31	37
East Leg	4	15
West Leg	17	2

Table 2-5
PM Peak Time Period – Pedestrian & Bicycle Observations
Intersection of LaSalle Road & Evergreen Drive

Leg of Intersection	Number of Pedestrian Crossings	Number of Bicycle Crossings
North Leg	0	0
South Leg	40	40
East Leg	8	19
West Leg	21	6

2.4 Vehicle Composition

Table 2-6 presents the statistics on vehicle composition along LaSalle Road. There is little variation in the types of vehicles that are encountered along the roadway when comparing before the school year started against after the school year started. Perhaps the biggest difference is in the percentages of cars and also of basic trucks/RV's (axle type 2A-4T). Essentially, there is an observed decrease in trucks and increase in cars for the northbound movement. For the southbound movement, the difference is negligible when comparing before the school year against after the school year. **Table 2-6** presents the full 24-hour period for which data was collected. **Table 2-7** and **Table 2-8** presents the data collected for the peak school hour drop-off period and the peak school hour pick-up period.

Table 2-6
Vehicle Composition (24-hour Period)
LaSalle Road (US Highway 2)

Axle Type*	LaSalle Road			
	Northbound		Southbound	
	Before School Year Began	After School Year Began	Before School Year Began	After School Year Began
Cycle	1%	1%	1%	0%
Cars	45%	56%	55%	53%
2A-4T	40%	29%	27%	30%
Buses	0%	0%	0%	0%
2A-SU	1%	1%	1%	1%
3A-SU	1%	1%	1%	1%
4A-SU	0%	0%	0%	0%
4A-ST	3%	6%	8%	8%
5A-ST	2%	1%	1%	1%
6A-ST	2%	1%	1%	1%
5A-MT	0%	0%	1%	0%
6A-MT	0%	0%	1%	1%
Other	4%	2%	3%	3%

* A- No. of axles; T- No. of tires; SU- Single Unit; ST- Single Trailer; MT- Multi-Trailer.
(Abbreviations according to the Federal Highway Administration's vehicle classification.)

Table 2-7
Vehicle Composition (Peak School Hours Before the School Year Began)
LaSalle Road (US Highway 2)

Axle Type*	LaSalle Road			
	Northbound		Southbound	
	8:15 - 9:15 am	2:45 - 3:45 pm	8:15 - 9:15 am	2:45 - 3:45 pm
Cycle	2%	1%	0%	1%
Cars	36%	46%	51%	49%
2A-4T	42%	38%	30%	29%
Buses	1%	0%	0%	0%
2A-SU	2%	1%	1%	4%
3A-SU	2%	1%	2%	11%
4A-SU	0%	0%	0%	2%
4A-ST	3%	4%	8%	59%
5A-ST	4%	2%	2%	10%
6A-ST	3%	4%	2%	7%
5A-MT	0%	0%	0%	8%
6A-MT	0%	0%	1%	18%
Other	5%	2%	2%	36%

* A- No. of axles; T- No. of tires; SU- Single Unit; ST- Single Trailer; MT- Multi-Trailer.
(Abbreviations according to the Federal Highway Administration's vehicle classification.)

Table 2-8
Vehicle Composition (Peak School Hours After the School Year Began)
LaSalle Road (US Highway 2)

Axle Type*	LaSalle Road			
	Northbound		Southbound	
	8:15 - 9:15 am	2:45 - 3:45 pm	8:15 - 9:15 am	2:45 – 3:45 pm
Cycle	1%	0%	0%	0%
Cars	49%	56%	47%	51%
2A-4T	32%	25%	35%	30%
Buses	0%	0%	0%	0%
2A-SU	2%	1%	2%	0%
3A-SU	3%	2%	1%	1%
4A-SU	1%	0%	0%	0%
4A-ST	5%	9%	6%	10%
5A-ST	2%	1%	1%	1%
6A-ST	1%	2%	4%	0%
5A-MT	1%	1%	1%	1%
6A-MT	0%	0%	1%	2%
Other	3%	2%	3%	4%

* A- No. of axles; T- No. of tires; SU- Single Unit; ST- Single Trailer; MT- Multi-Trailer. (Abbreviations according to the Federal Highway Administration's vehicle classification.)

2.5 Number of Crashes & Involvement

A basic amount of crash data was collected for the intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive from data previously requested as part of the *Kalispell Area Transportation Plan (2006 Update)*. The data analysis period for that project was the three-year time period from January 1st, 2003 thru December 31st, 2005. **Table 2-9** on the following page presents the number of crashes recorded at the intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive, along with statistics of how many vehicles and/or pedestrians were involved. The differentiation between fatalities and injury crashes are also noted.

It is interesting to note that during the three-year time period of analysis, no pedestrian crashes or fatalities were recorded for this intersection.

Table 2-9
Number of Crashes and Involvement
Intersection of LaSalle Road & Evergreen Drive

# of Crashes	# Vehicles	# Pedestrians	# Fatalities	# Injuries
1	2	0	0	0
2	2	0	0	1
3	3	0	0	3
4	2	0	0	2
5	2	0	0	2
6	3	0	0	1
7	2	0	0	0
8	2	0	0	1
9	2	0	0	0
10	3	0	0	2
11	2	0	0	2
12	2	0	0	0
13	3	0	0	0
14	2	0	0	0
15	2	0	0	0
16	4	0	0	1
17	2	0	0	0
18	2	0	0	0
19	2	0	0	1
20	3	0	0	1
21	2	0	0	0
22	2	0	0	0

2.6 Types of Crashes

Table 2-10 shows the general types of crashes that occurred during the three-year time period of analysis. The predominant crash trend was that of rear end crashes (50%) on LaSalle Road, followed by right angle crashes (27%). This coincides with verbal conclusions relayed to RPA by the Flathead County Sheriffs Office, and the school crossing guards – one of which has been at the intersection for over ten (10) years.

Table 2-10
Types of Crashes
Intersection of LaSalle Road & Evergreen Drive

Collision Type	Number of Crashes	Percent of Total
Rear End	11	50%
Right Angle	6	27%
Side Swipe	2	9%
Left Turn	2	9%
Other	1	5%

2.7 Time of Crashes

Another interesting statistic that is useful is the general time period when the various crashes occurred at the intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive. **Table 2-11** shows the time period of the twenty-two (22) recorded crashes during the three-year analysis period. The highest percentage of crashes occurred after 4:00 pm (41%), followed by the time period between 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm (31%).

Table 2-11
Time of Crashes
Intersection of LaSalle Road & Evergreen Drive

Time Period	Number of Crashes	Percent of Total
Midnight – 7 am	1	5%
7 am – 9 am	3	14%
9 am – 2 pm	2	9%
2 pm – 4 pm	7	31%
4 pm - Midnight	9	41%

2.8 Month of Crashes

A final statistic worth noting is the month of crashes for the twenty-two (22) crashes recorded during the three-year time period. As evidenced by the data presented in **Table 2-12**, the highest percentage months were May (18%), November (18%), and June (13%). These were followed by July (9%), August (9%) and September (9%), which are typically the highest traffic volume months in the area.

Table 2-12
Recorded Crashes by Month
Intersection of LaSalle Road & Evergreen Drive

Month	Number of Crashes	Percent of Total
January	0	0%
February	1	5%
March	1	5%
April	1	5%
May	4	18%
June	3	13%
July	2	9%
August	2	9%
September	2	9%
October	0	0%
November	4	18%
December	2	9%

2.9 Preliminary Conclusions

The above presented data can be viewed in the overall context of the Evergreen *Safe Routes to School (SRTS)* study to determine if there are any trends or patterns specific to the school hour time periods. First and foremost, travel speeds along LaSalle Road appear to be higher than the posted speed limits for the 85th percentile grouping in almost all circumstances. The roadway corridor itself is a busy, five-lane principal arterial section that serves the thru-mobility needs of the traveling public. The location of the school adjacent to this facility results in some discourse between moving vehicles and serving the school site. This is coupled with numerous private access along the entire stretch of LaSalle Road. Note that the procedures required to contemplate a change in the speed limit are noted at the end of this chapter.

The intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive is a troublesome intersection with a good volume of pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Two (2) crossing guards work this intersection. One is placed at the southwest corner of the intersection, and the other at the southeast corner of the intersection. The crossing guards do a wonderful job of moving the students through the intersection, however once they are "out of sight" from the guards, the students pretty much travel where they want. This is not always a safe endeavor. It was observed that numerous students travel through the Glacier Bank parking lot once they cross LaSalle Road to access the residential areas southeast of the intersection.

There was no observed crossing of LaSalle Road away from the intersection. This is contrary to earlier statements provided during the scoping of this study. Almost all pedestrian traffic is utilizing the intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive during peak school periods. Pedestrian crossings on the west side of the intersection are primarily associated with students traveling to the church parking lot at the northwest corner of the intersection, where parents are waiting to pick up their children (or drop them off in the morning).

The prevalence of "rear-end" crashes along LaSalle Road is somewhat expected due to the presence of the traffic signal and the speed data for the corridor. Crossing guards have stated that often times vehicles will not slow down in time as they enter the intersection, and have to basically go through the early red light phase. RPA observed this several times during data collection.

An interesting side note is that there are quite heavy truck movements along LaSalle Road (logging trucks, gravel trucks, etc.). These vehicles appear to observe the posted speed limits in the area, and if they cannot stop in time for the red light during school periods, they have an "unwritten rule" to honk at the crossing guards so they know not to shuttle the students through the intersection.

The intersection radii do cause significant concerns for student safety. There is presently only one lane on Evergreen Drive in each direction at the intersection. This causes problems as left-turning vehicles cause a stacking issue that tends to make other drivers skirt around the left-turning vehicles in the middle of the intersection. This occurs frequently, and often times the vehicles skirt over so far that they are almost in the crosswalks. The primary issue, though, is the eastbound right-tuning traffic off of Evergreen Drive. This right-turn traffic uses the striped shoulder area on the west leg of Evergreen Drive as an informal right-turn lane. Because of the geometrics at this location, almost every vehicle doing this maneuver crosses the curb and gutter at the southwest corner of the intersection. This does cause concern as many times the students are at the corner of the intersection waiting to cross.

In conclusion, the above collected data does not suggest that there are any trends or statistics out of the ordinary along LaSalle Road (a five-lane principal arterial facility). Many of the issues brought to the forefront by the Evergreen community, and observed by RPA, have centered solely on Evergreen Drive and the primary intersection of Evergreen Drive with LaSalle Road.

Procedures for Revising Speed Limits on MDT Facilities

Step 1: Requests for changes in a speed limit should be submitted to the department by local governments or state agencies. If an individual submits a request, MDT will contact the appropriate local governing authority for approval.

Step 2: Following receipt of a request, MDT sends a letter to the requestor explaining the specific procedures. MDT staff then meets with the local government to explain the law, Department and Montana Transportation Commission responsibilities, and the traffic and engineering study used to develop recommendations.

Step 3: The local government has 30 days after the meeting to decide whether to sign a letter saying the officials want the study to continue.

Step 4: If the local government gives its approval, traffic engineers conduct a traffic and engineering study as required by law and then provides recommendations to the local government for review and comment. Recommendations are based on several factors, including the 85th percentile speed and pace.

Step 5: Following a 60 - day review period, the study results and MDT's recommendation are presented to the Montana Transportation Commission at its next regular meeting. The local government receives written notification of recommendations and is also informed of the Commission meeting date and given an opportunity to appear before the Commission.

Step 6: If the Transportation Commission approves the change, MDT makes the necessary signing changes and notifies the Montana Highway Patrol of the approved speed limits.

Chapter 3
Survey Results & Findings

Chapter 3 Survey Results & Findings

3.1 Introduction

As part of the Evergreen Schools "Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) study, a survey was handed out during the parent/teacher conferences held in November 2006 to be completed by the parents of the students at the Evergreen Schools. This survey was intended to receive input from parents that would identify physical (sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic signals, etc.) and educational (student education, parent education, community education) improvements that may provide safer walking and bicycling conditions for the Evergreen students. A total of 95 surveys were actually returned as a result of the survey distribution, and accounted for a student population of 150 students (many of the parents had more than one student attending one or both of the schools). A copy of the parent survey is attached to this report in **Appendix D**.

3.2 Survey Results

Question 1: Please provide the gender, age and grade of each of your children attending our school.

Figure 3-1 shows that of the surveys that were completed, 50% of the students were male and 50 % of the students were female. **Figure 3-2** shows the proportion of ages of these students and F**igure 3-3** shows the grade level of the students.

Figure 3-1

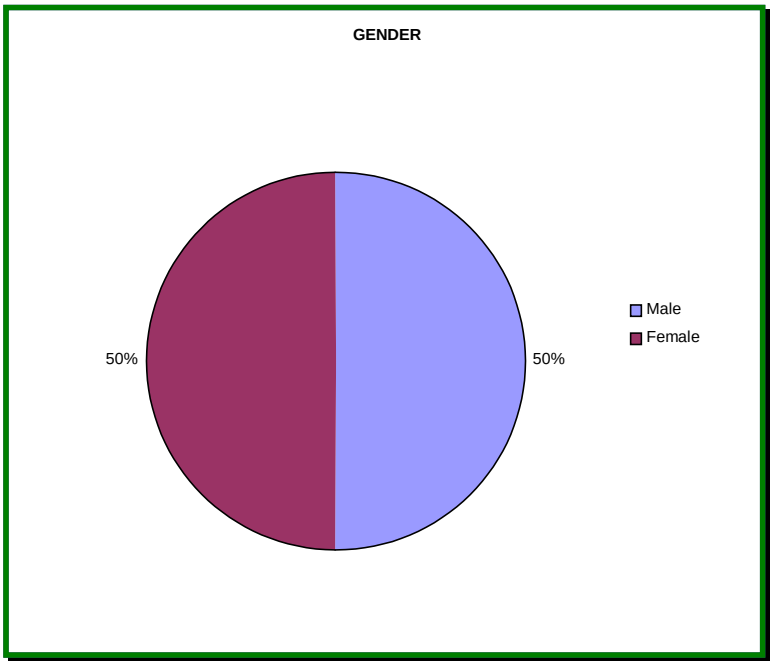


Figure 3-2

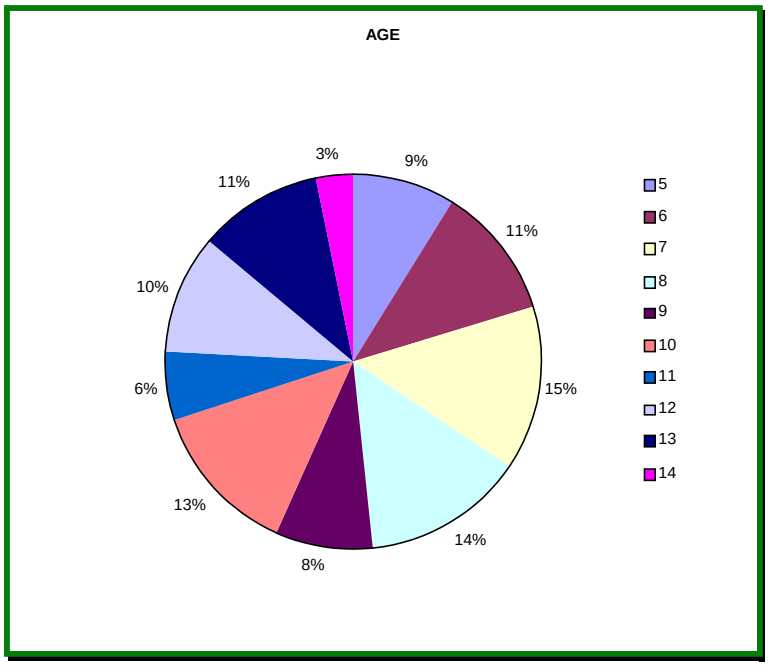
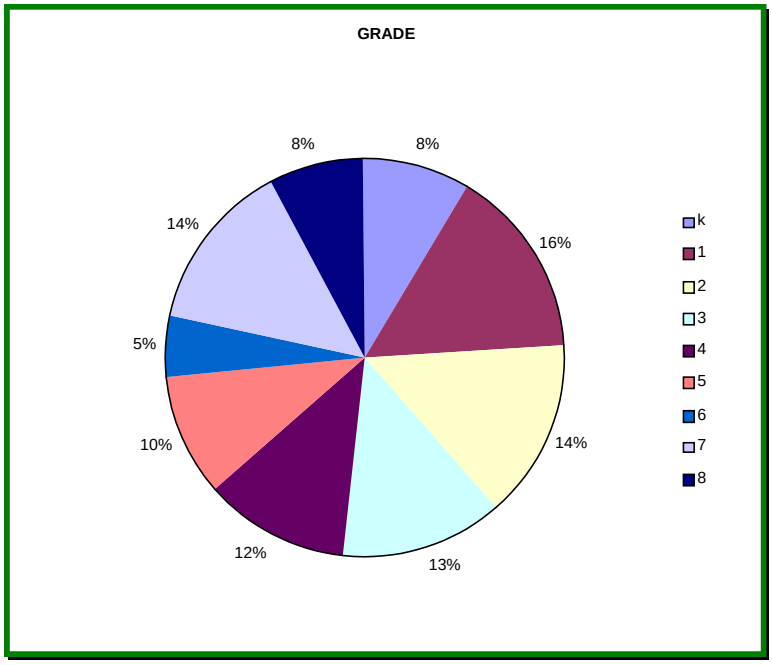


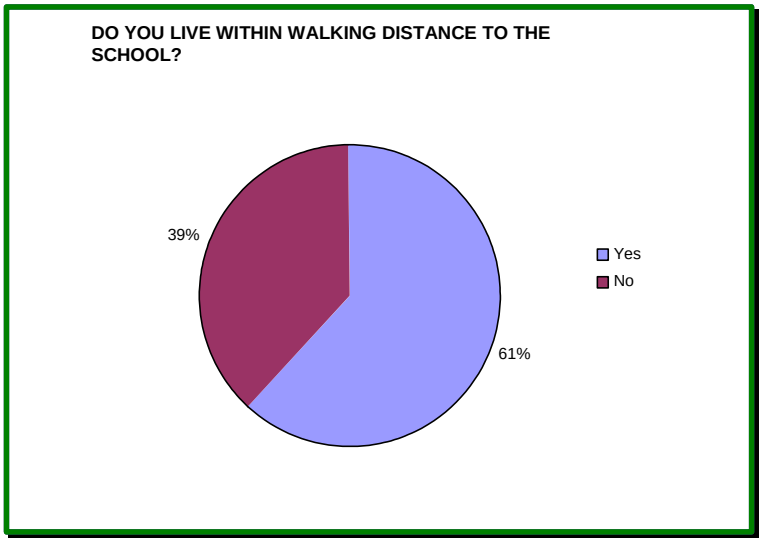
Figure 3-3



Question 2: In your opinion, do you live within walking distance to the school?

Figure 3-4 shows that 61% of respondents live within walking distance to the school.

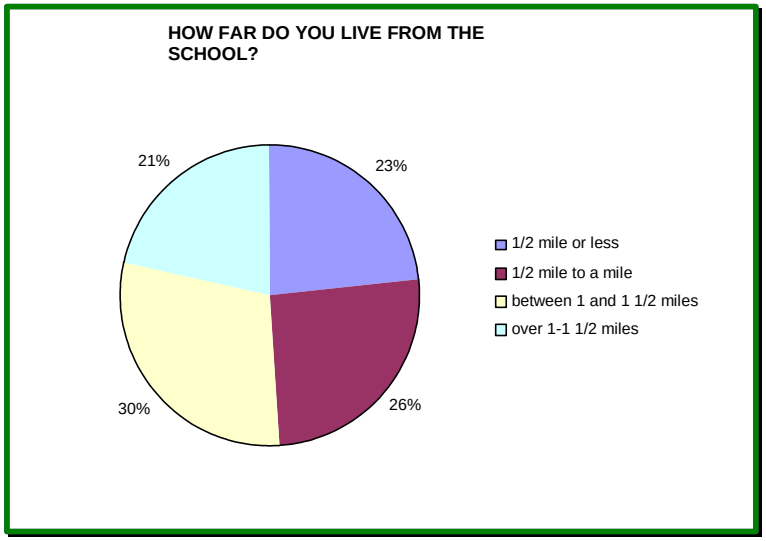
Figure 3-4



Question 3: About how far do you live from the school?

Figure 3-5 show that a majority of the respondents (51%) live 1 mile or more from the school.

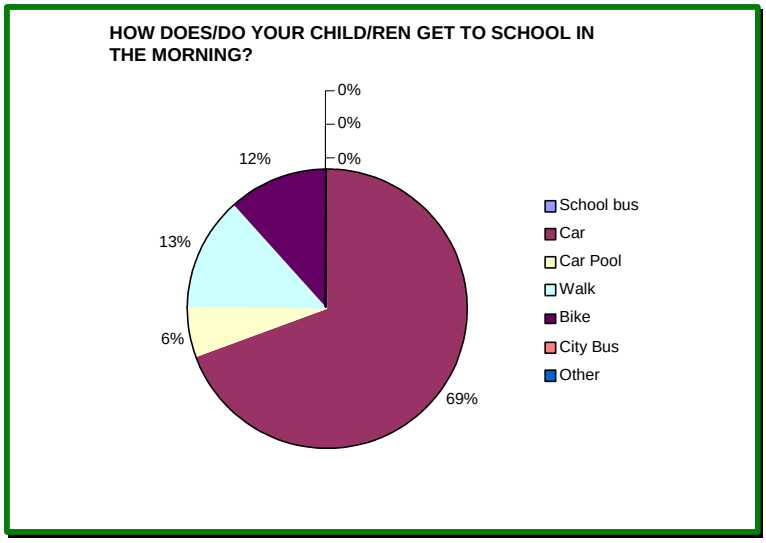
Figure 3-5



Question 4: How does/do your child/ren get to school in the morning?

Figure 3-6 shows that 69% of students are driven to school in the morning.

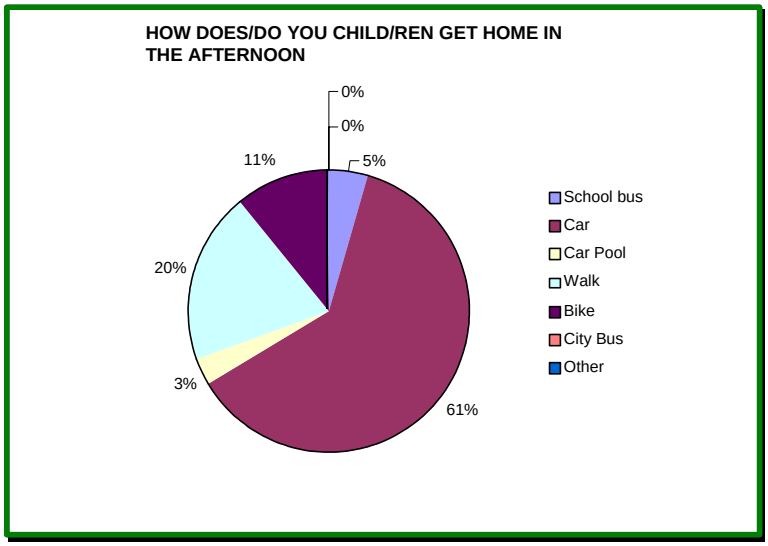
Figure 3-6



Question 5: How does/do your child/ren get home in the afternoon?

Figure 3-7 shows that 69% of students are picked up from school either by car, car pool or bus. While neither Evergreen School is currently has school bus service, the Boys and Girls Club, located south of Highway 35 has a bus that will pick up students in the afternoon.

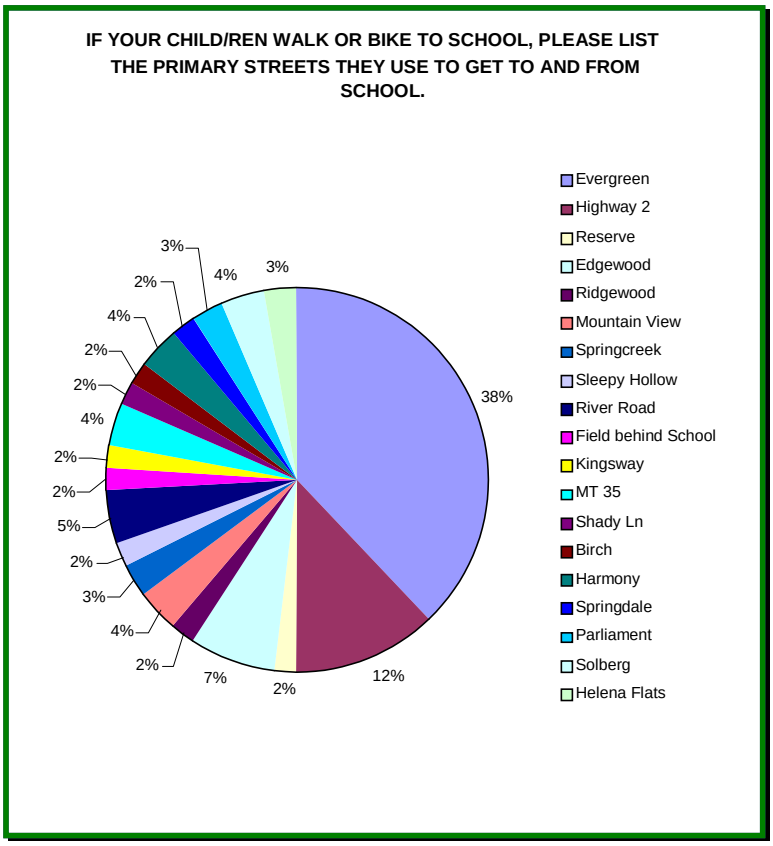
Figure 3-7



<u>Question 6</u>: If your child/ren walk or bike to school, please list the primary streets they use to get to and from school.

Figure 3-8 shows that 38% of the respondents listed Evergreen Drive as the primary street their children use to get to and from school.

Figure 3-8



Other streets listed included:

- Shadow Lane
- Cooperative Way
- Bernard Road
- Maple Drive
- Park Drive
- Cottonwood Drive
- Willow Drive
- Spruce Road
- Pheasant Drive
- Terry Road
- Margrethe Road

Question 7: How do you feel about the following statements pertaining to the walking and biking conditions in your neighborhood?

a. There are too many high-speed vehicles in my neighborhood.
b. There are high amounts of vehicle traffic in my neighborhood.
c. There are broken sidewalks in my neighborhood.
d. There are gaps in the sidewalk network in my neighborhood.
e. There is poor lighting in my neighborhood.
f. There is a crime problem within my neighborhood.
g. There are not enough crosswalks in my neighborhood.
h. There are not enough crossing guards in my neighborhood.
i. It is dangerous to walk or bike to our school via sidewalks and roads.
j. I feel comfortable having my child/ren walk or bike to school.
k. List specific locations where poor conditions exist.

Figure 3-9 shows that 63% of parents strongly agree that there are too many high-speed vehicles in their neighborhood.

Figure 3-9

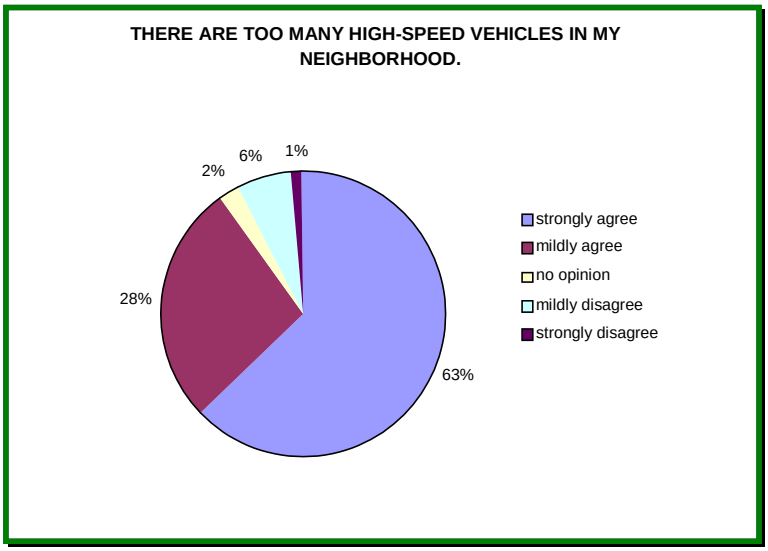


Figure 3-10 shows that 64% of parents strongly agree that there are high amounts of vehicle traffic in their neighborhood.

Figure 3-10

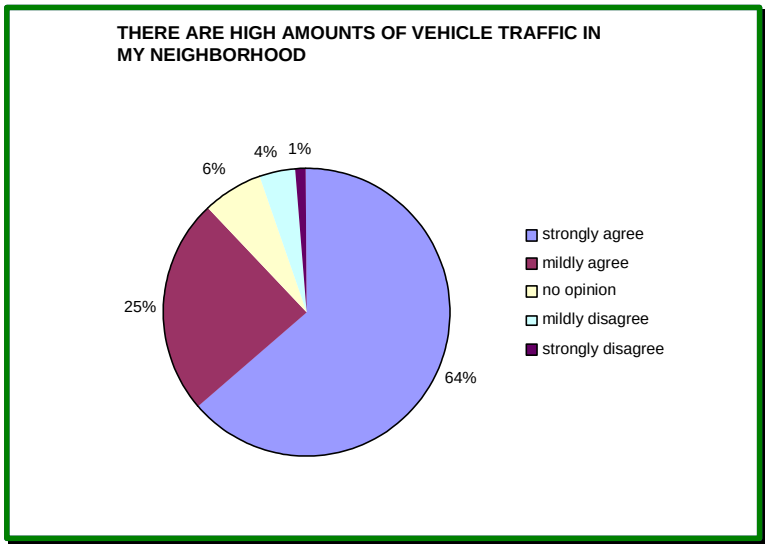


Figure 3-11 shows that while 36% of parents strongly agree there are broken sidewalks in their neighborhood, 44% had no opinion. This may be due to the fact that there are no sidewalks located in their neighborhoods and therefore, they had no opinion on the subject.

Figure 3-11

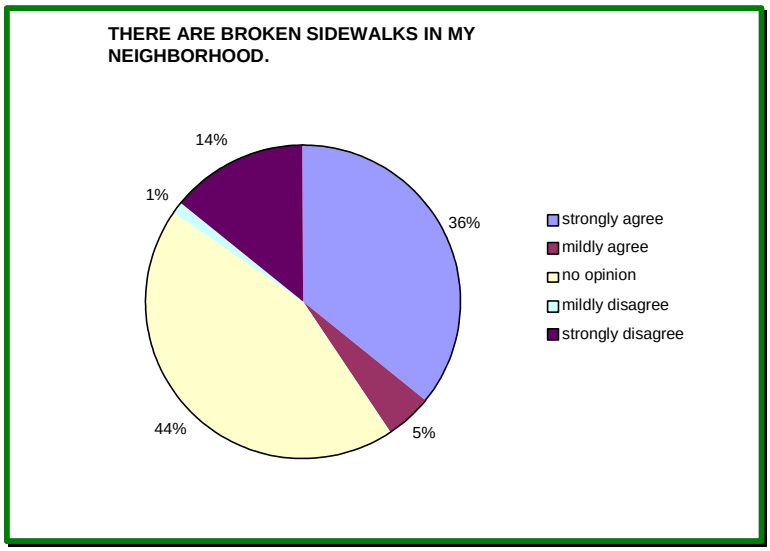


Figure 3-12 shows that while 33% of parents strongly agree there are gaps in the sidewalk network in their neighborhood, 47% had no opinion. Again, this may be due to the fact that there are no sidewalks located in their neighborhoods and therefore, they had no opinion on the subject.

Figure 3-12

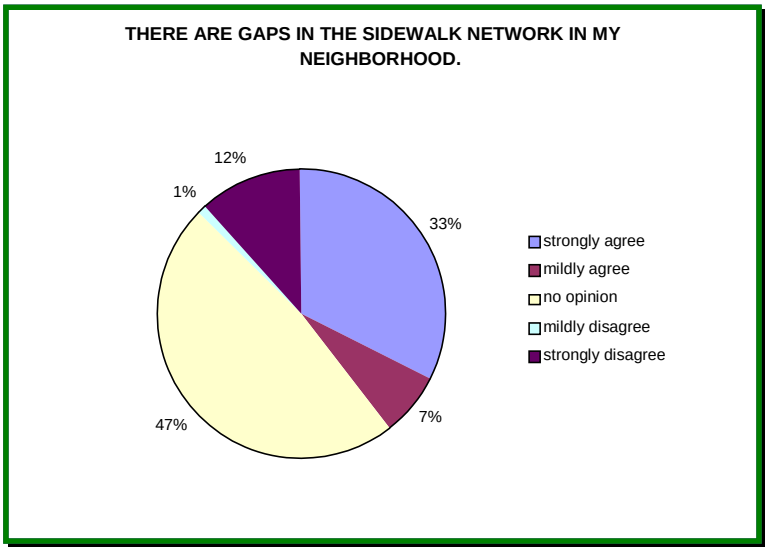


Figure 3-13 shows 70% of parents strongly agreed that there is poor lighting in their neighborhood.

Figure 3-13

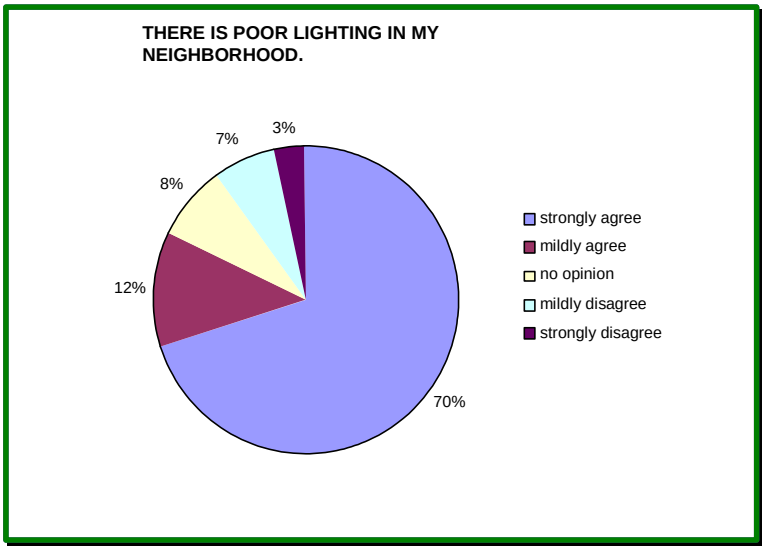


Figure 3-14 shows that 36% of parents agreed that there is a crime problem in their neighborhood while 36% disagreed and 28% had no opinion on the subject.

Figure 3-14

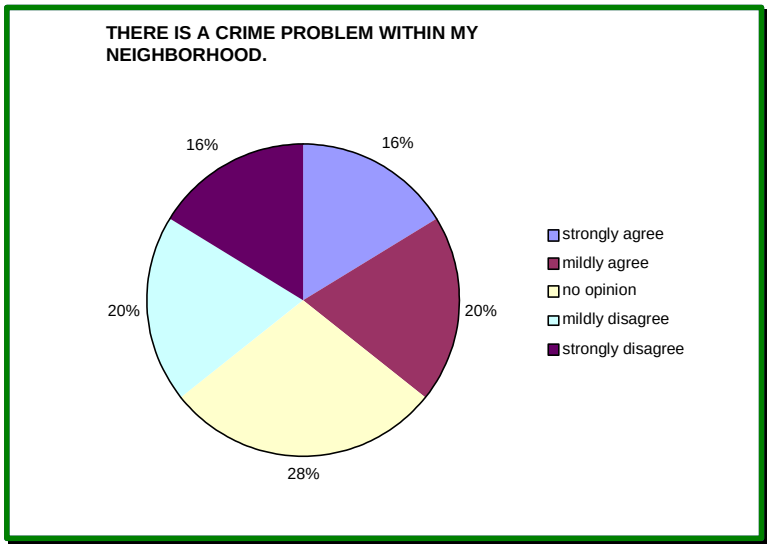


Figure 3-15 shows that 53% of parents believe there are not enough crosswalks in their neighborhood. In fact, the only crosswalks in the area are located at Reserve and Highway 2, Evergreen and Highway 2, Highway 2 and Highway 35, and Highway 35 and Shady Lane.

Figure 3-15

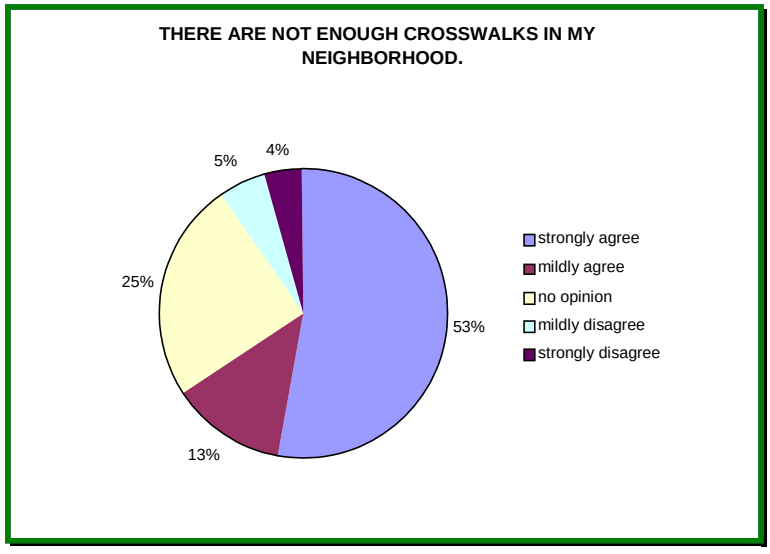


Figure 3-16 shows that 51% of parents believe there are not enough crossing guards in their neighborhood. The only intersection that currently has a crossing guard is at Highway 2 and Evergreen Drive.

Figure 3-16

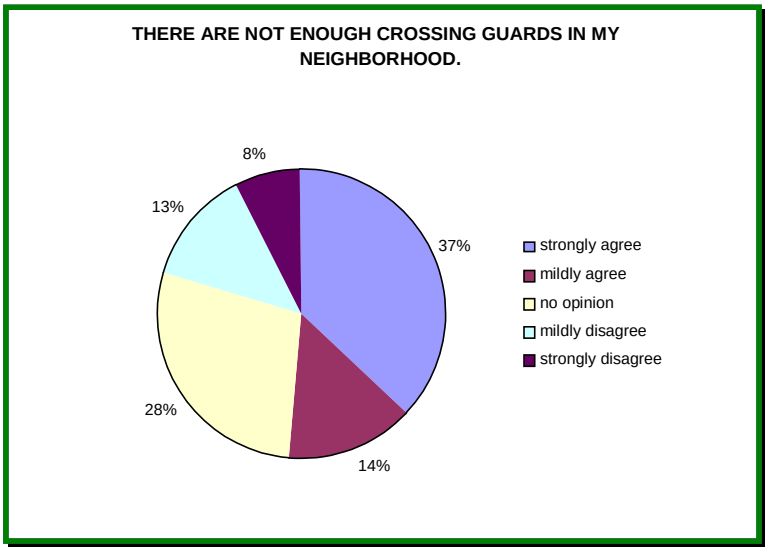


Figure 3-17 shows that 88% of parents believe that it is dangerous to walk or bike to school via sidewalks and roads.

Figure 3-17

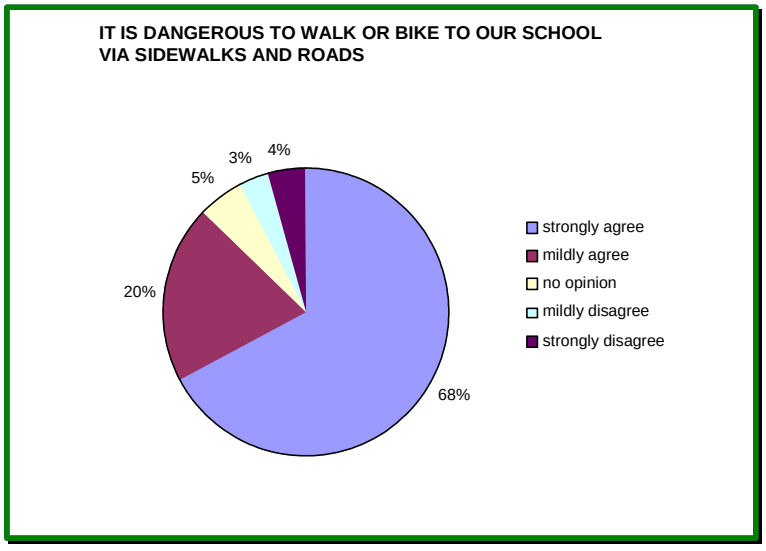


Figure 3-18 shows that 74% of parents do not feel comfortable having their children walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-18

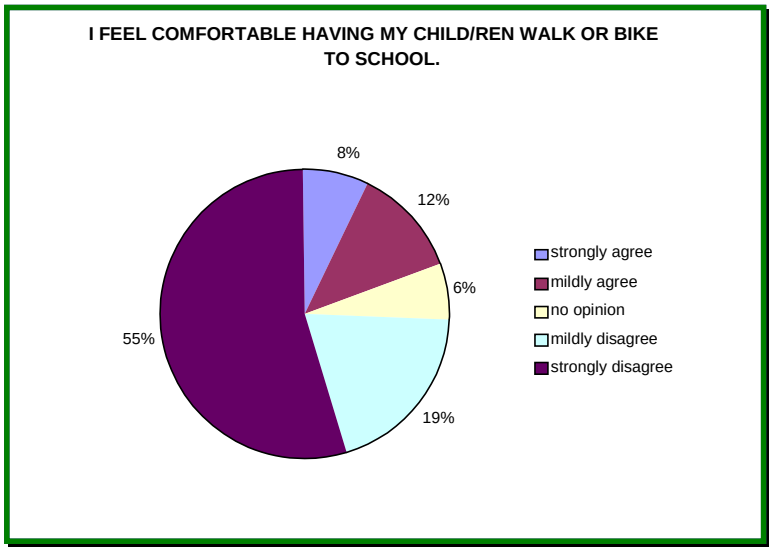
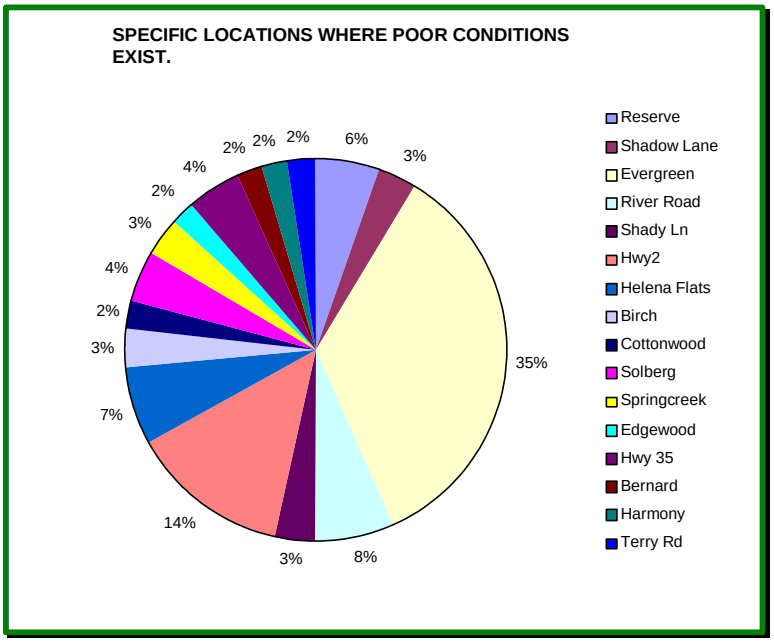


Figure 3-19 shows that 35% of parents listed Evergreen Drive where poor conditions exist.

Figure 3-19



Other streets listed included:

- Cooperative Way
- Springdale Drive
- Park Drive
- Kingsway
- Ridgewood Drive
- Cedar Road
- Tumblecreek
- Pheasant Drive
- Conrad Drive
- Margarethe Road

Question 8: Which of the following statements would influence your decision to consider letting your oldest child walk or bicycle to school? I would let my oldest child walk or bike to school:

a. If they were accompanied by an adult.
b. If they were accompanied by other children the same age.
c. If they were accompanied by an older child.
d. If new sidewalks and crossings were installed.
e. If Police patrols and crossing guards were along school routes.
f. If they received walking/bicycle safety education from the school.
g. If we lived closer to the school.

Figure 3-20 shows that 67% of parents would consider letting their oldest child walk or bicycle to school if they were accompanied by an adult.

Figure 3-20

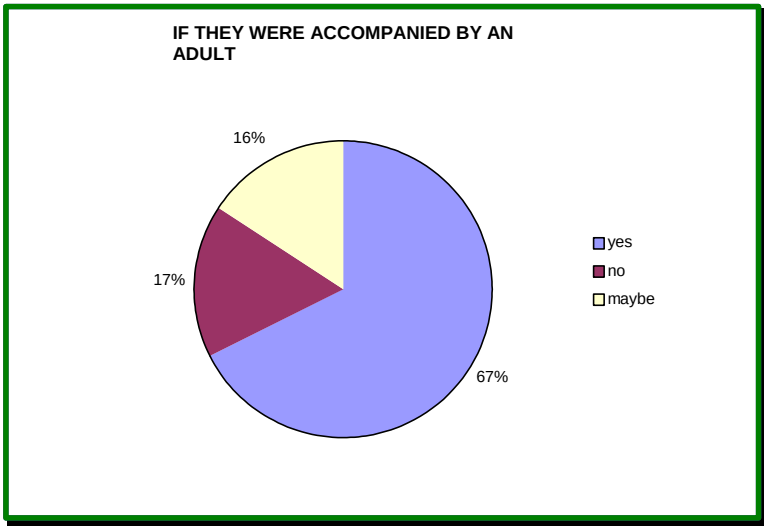


Figure 3-21 shows that 43% of parents would consider letting their oldest child walk or bicycle to school if they were accompanied by other children the same age.

Figure 3-21

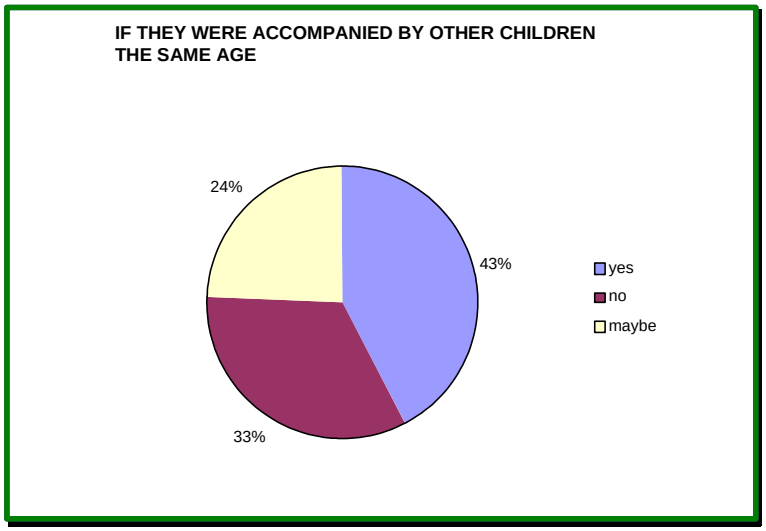


Figure 3-22 shows that 37% of parents would consider letting their oldest child walk or bicycle to school if they were accompanied by an older child.

Figure 3-22

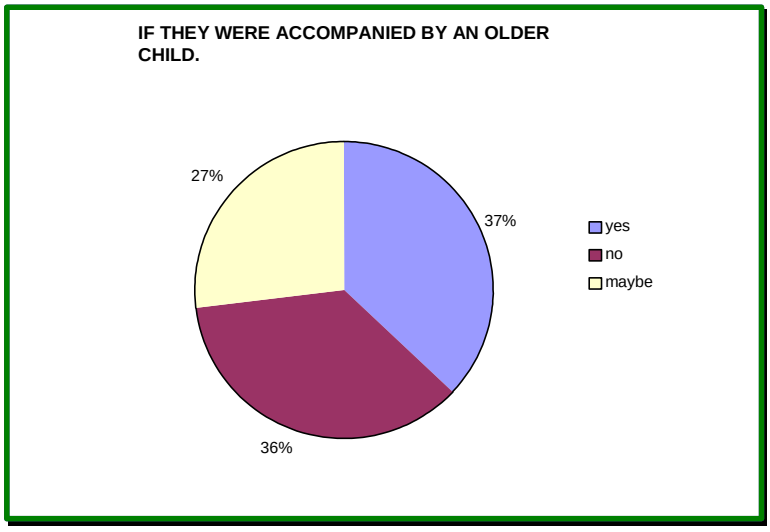


Figure 3-23 shows that 65% of parents would consider letting their oldest child walk or bicycle to school if new sidewalks and crossings were installed.

Figure 3-23

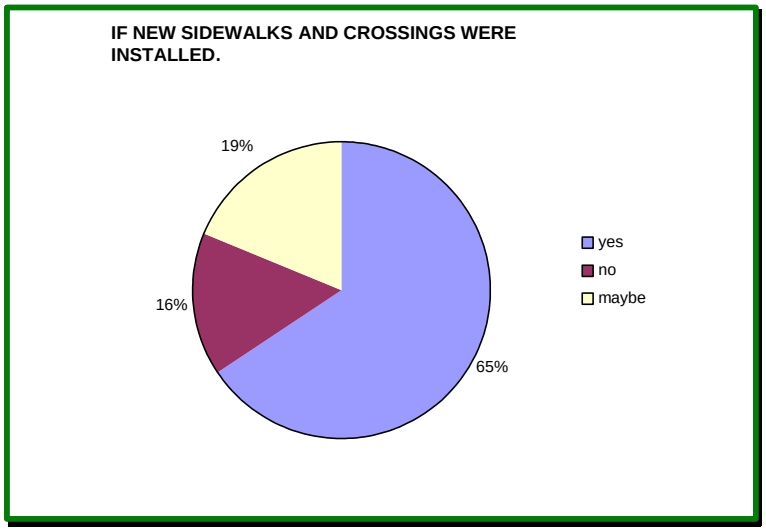


Figure 3-24 shows that 69% of parents would consider letting their oldest child walk or bicycle to school if police patrols and crossing guards were along school routes.

Figure 3-24

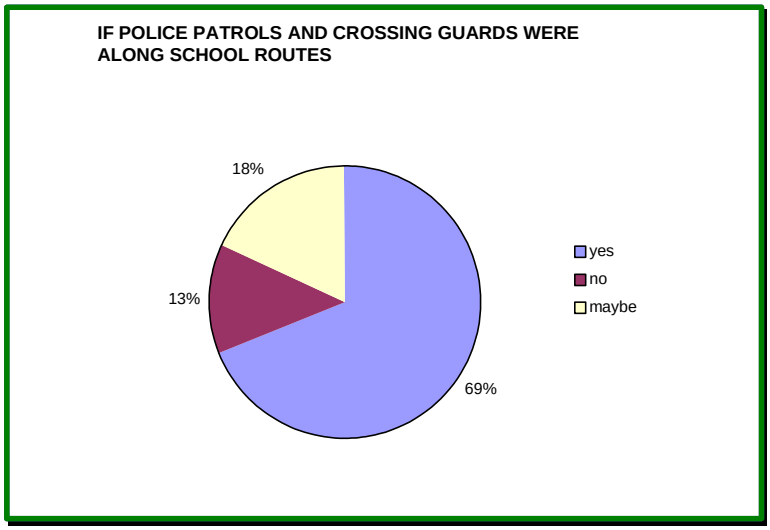


Figure 3-25 shows that 50% of parents would consider letting their oldest child walk or bicycle to school if they received walking/biking safety education from the school.

Figure 3-25

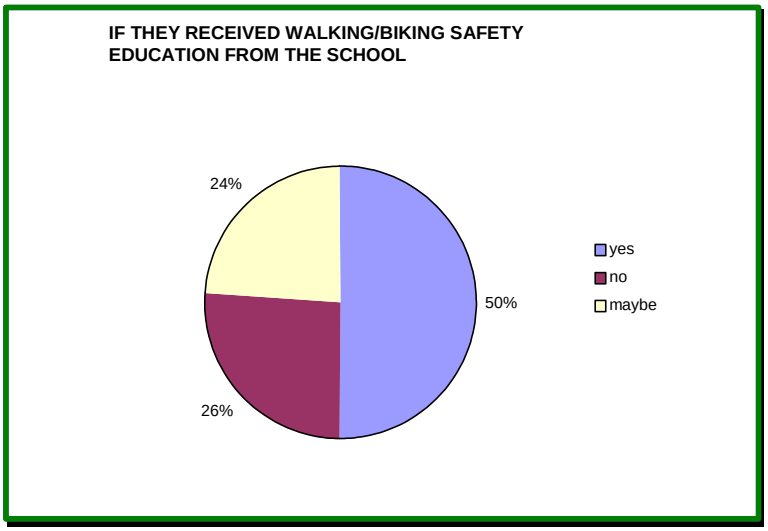
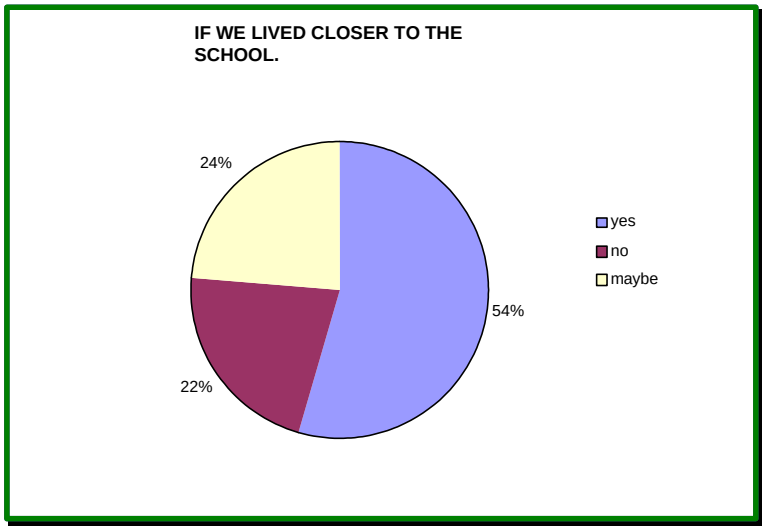


Figure 3-26 shows that 54% of parents would consider letting their oldest child walk or bicycle to school if they lived closer to the school.

Figure 3-26



Question 9: How important are the following factors in influencing your decision to allow your child to walk or bicycle to school?

a. Crossing guards at all busy intersections.
b. Continuous sidewalks from your house to the school
c. Clearly marked walking and bicycling routes (with signs).
d. Separated trail connecting your neighborhood to the school.
e. Slower traffic in the neighborhood.
f. Better lighting.
g. Emergency call boxes and designated safe houses (safer community).
h. Increases Police presence in the neighborhood.
i. Secure places to park bicycles (bike racks).
j. School education programs on walking and biking safety.
k. Any additional factors that influence your decision to allow your child to walk or bicycle to school.

Figure 3-27 shows that 92% of parents believe that having crossing guards at all busy intersections is very important in influencing their decision to allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-27

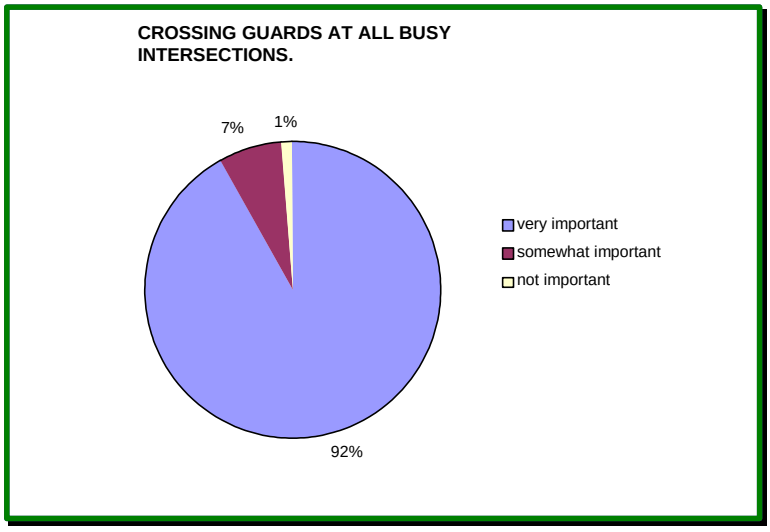


Figure 3-28 shows that 73% of parents believe that having continuous sidewalks from their house to the school is very important in influencing their decision to allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-28

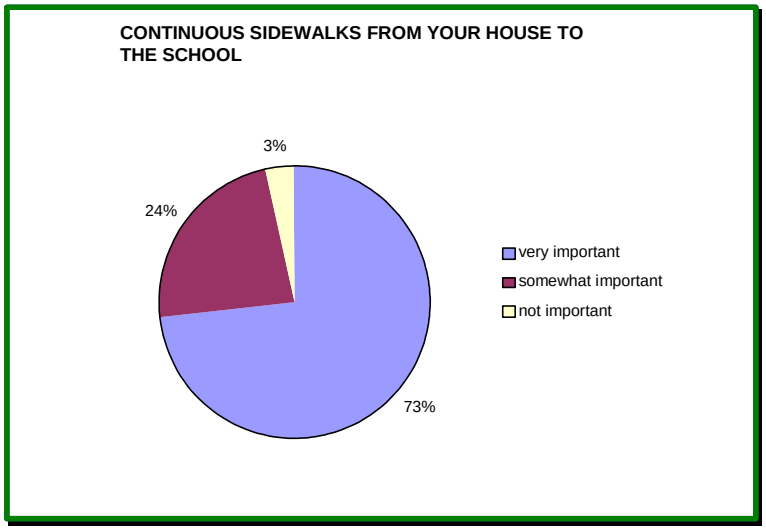


Figure 3-29 shows that 89% of parents believe that having clearly marked walking and bicycle routes (with signs) is very important in influencing their decision to allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-29

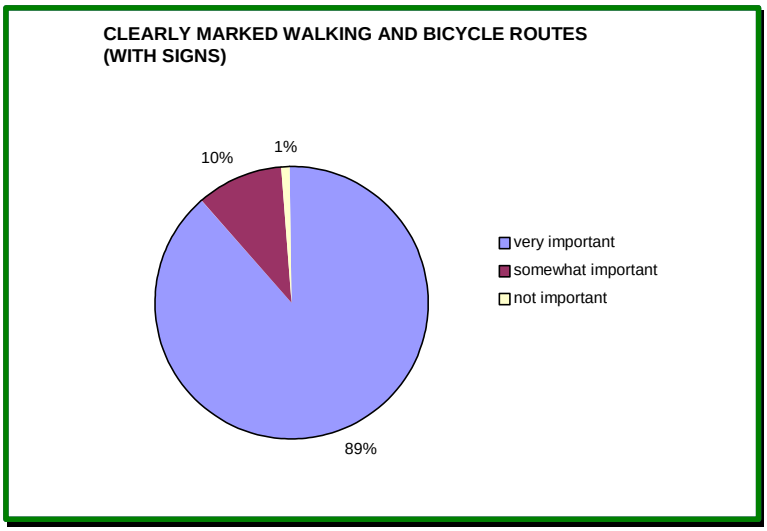


Figure 3-30 shows that 57% of parents believe that having a separated trail connecting their neighborhood to the school is very important in influencing their decision to allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-30

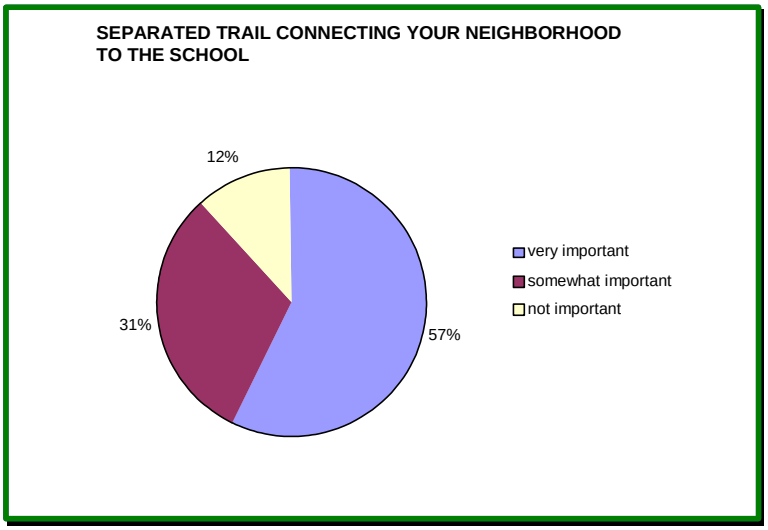


Figure 3-31 shows that 81% of parents believe that having slower traffic in the neighborhood is very important in influencing their decision to allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-31

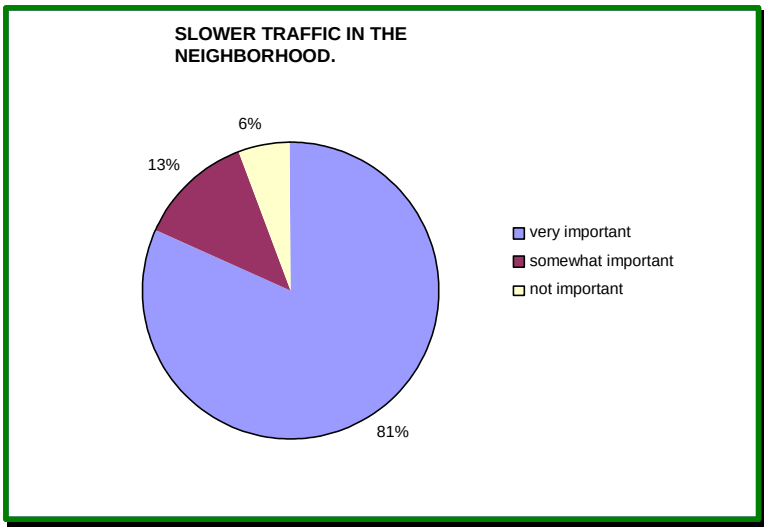


Figure 3-32 shows that 70% of parents believe that having better lighting in their neighborhood is very important in influencing their decision to allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-32

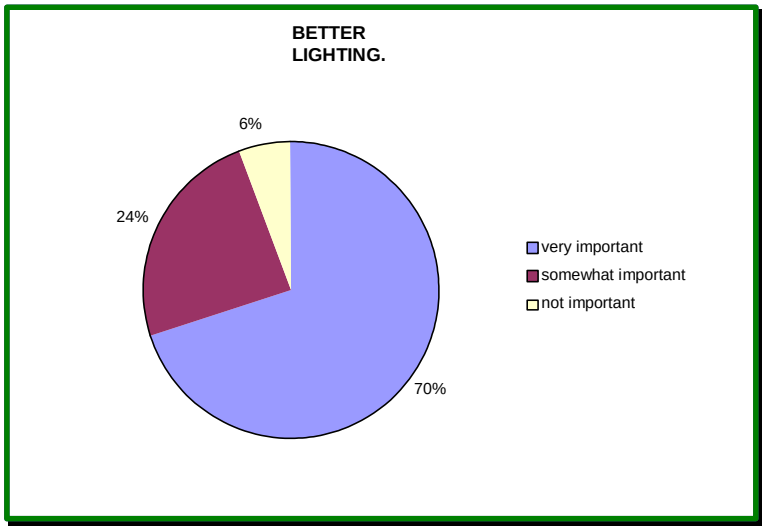


Figure 3-33 shows that 56% of parents believe that having emergency call boxes and designated safe houses is very important in influencing their decision to allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-33

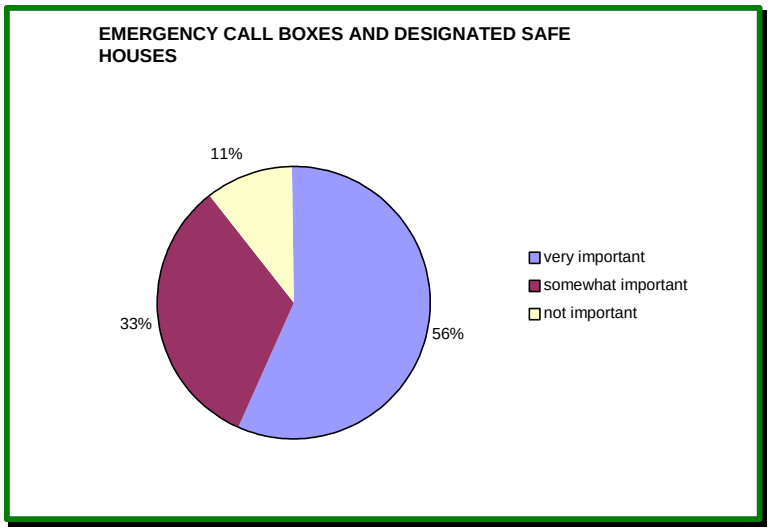


Figure 3-34 shows that 92% of parents believe that increased police presence in their neighborhood is very important in influencing their decision to allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-34

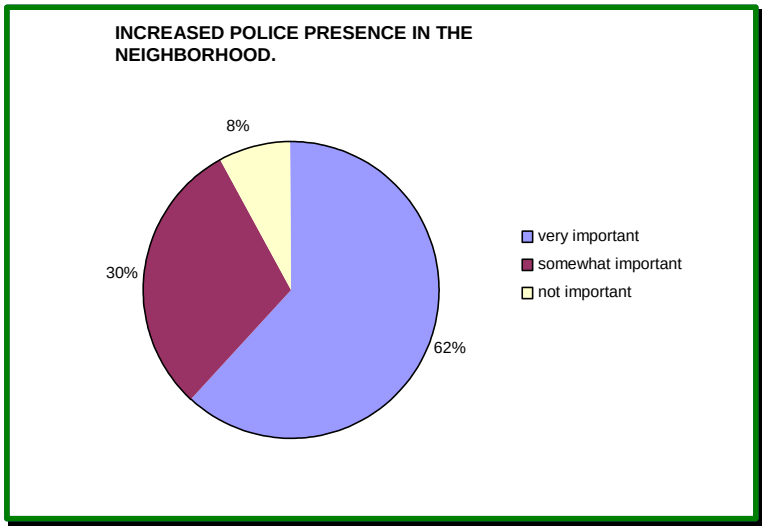


Figure 3-35 shows that 60% of parents believe that having secure place to park bicycles (bike racks) is very important in influencing their decision to allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-35

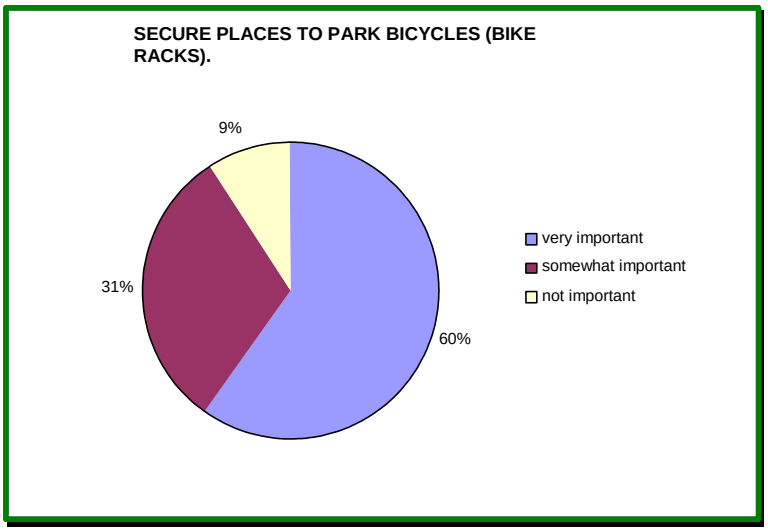
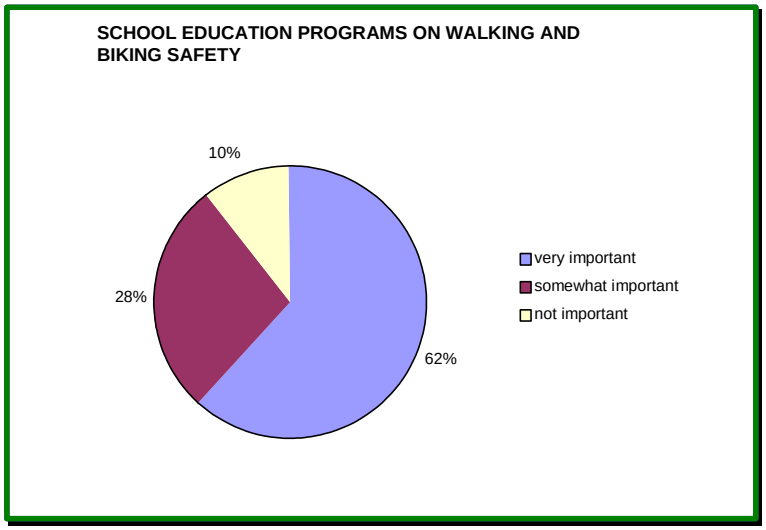


Figure 3-36 shows that 62% of parents believe that having school education programs on walking and biking safety is very important in influencing their decision to allow their children to walk or bike to school.

Figure 3-36



Comments given by the parents that indicated what may influence their decision to allow their children to walk or bicycle to school included:

- I really worry about sexual predators on the way and around the school.
- I think putting up lighting would be one of the best things to do it gets very dark (in winter) and that bothers me for my daughter to walk in the dark by herself.
- My children will not be walking or biking to school - too dangerous.
- There are too many weirdos in our neighborhoods. Look on the internet (sex offenders website) to be designating safe houses how do we know?
- Not allow sex offenders to live in or near main route for students. East Evergreen Dr.
- I encourage my son to walk with his friends to and from school. We also got him a cell phone to carry with him for any situation that may arise regarding his safety.
- There are frequent police at intersections near the school to slow traffic, however, there needs to be walk way on one side of the road or the other on both in the case of E. Evergreen Drive. The other problem is sexual/violent offenders living in the area.
- Weather/temperature/road conditions.
- We live too far for any child of any age to walk to school. It simply isn't safe or feasible in inclement weather and the congestion and chaos at the elementary and middle school every afternoon caused by parents required to ferry children to and from is an unacceptable formula for transportation to educational services required.

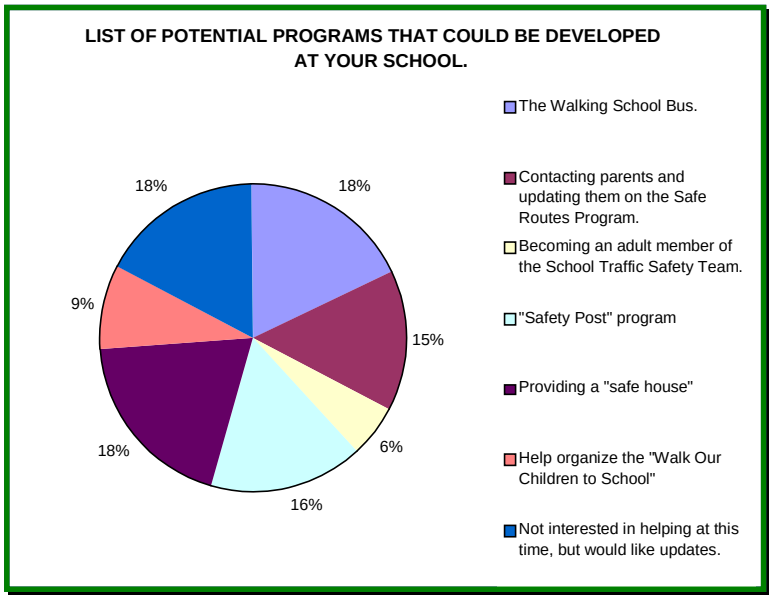
- I'm of a unique perspective as far as allowing my child to walk or bike due to the fact that she has autism. It would take a great deal of education for her to learn how to be safe.
- As it is, I only let my kids ride bikes when I am with them. It is simply too dangerous. I think the combination of education along with safe paths/sidewalks will be extremely beneficial.
- Age.
- I think my child is safe biking or walking.
- There are no sidewalks along LaSalle.
- No sidewalks on Shady Lane at all which is a huge traffic route for working people as well as "big rigs" such as sidedumpers, 18 wheelers, dump trucks, concrete trucks, log trucks, which leads to Highway 35 without trails or sidewalks either. Unsafe for any pedestrian.
- My child lives too far away to walk to school. 21/2 miles is way to far for an 8 year old, 5 miles a day is a bit much.
- My decision no to let my child walk to school has nothing to do with the condition of the neighborhood. It mainly has to do with not wanting to take a chance with my child. Too many bad things happen and I'm not going to think it can't happen to me and mine.
- I feel the children/students at Evergreen Elementary and Middle should have a bus schedule. It would eliminate all the poor conditions listed previously.

<u>Question 10</u>: Traffic Safety education programs are a primary component of the safe routes program. Below is a list of potential programs that could be developed at your school. Please check ones that you would like to learn more about.

a. The Walking School Bus (walking to/from school with an adult supervising a group of children.
b. Contacting parents and updating them on the Safe Routes Program.
c. Becoming an adult member of the School Traffic Safety Team.
d. “Safety Post” program, where parents or other adult volunteers remain present at various locations during AM and PM travel times.
e. Providing a “safe house” for children who may need assistance.
f. Help organize the “Walk Our Children to School” event.
g. Not interested in helping at this time, but would like updates.
h. Other, please list ideas below.

Figure 3-37 shows the interest in the Traffic Safety education programs that could be developed at their school.

Figure 3-37



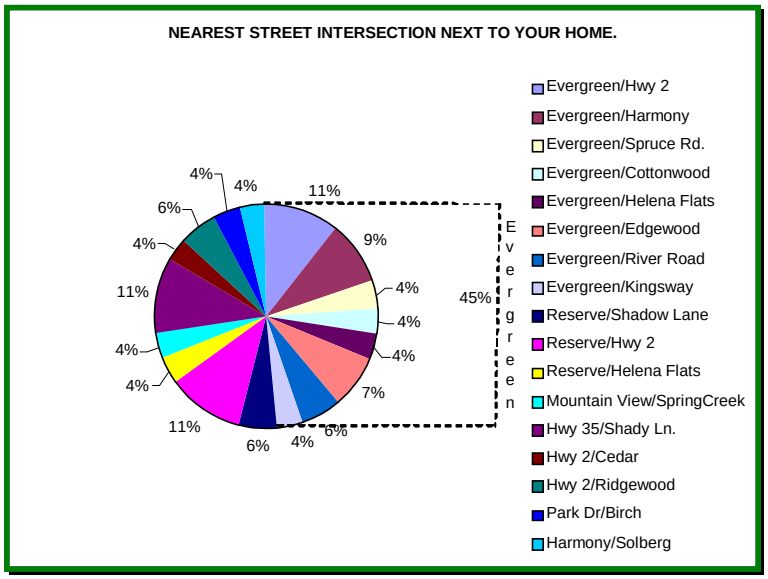
Other ideas listed included:

- Sidewalks or bike trails is all we want.
- The school should purchase the homes north of the school for additional parking and for parents to drop off children and reduce the traffic congestion on East Evergreen.
- Bike rodeo, simple repairs, helmet safety.
- How about a levy for funds to fund school buses. I'd pay higher taxes for the service.
- I'm a full time student, but if you need something that fits my varied schedule I'll help where I can, just call or e-mail me with more info.
- Provide a bus system for more than 1 mile walk to school. Less traffic will be created.

Question 11: Please list below the nearest street intersection next to your home.

Figure 3-38 shows that 45% of the intersections listed are along Evergreen Drive.

Figure 3-38



Other street intersections listed included:

- Reserve Drive /Silver Shadow Estates
- Reserve Drive/Cooperative Way
- Springcreek Drive/Highway 2
- River Place/River Road
- Cottonwood Drive/River Road
- Highway 35/Cedar Drive
- Springdale Drive/Park Drive
- Birch Drive/Forest Drive
- Willow Drive/Spruce Road
- Birch Drive/Evergreen Drive
- Springcreek Drive/Solberg Drive
- Helena Flats Road/Highway 35
- Evergreen Drive/Bernard Road
- Conrad Drive/Highway 2
- Birch Drive/Springdale Drive
- Margarethe Rd./Terry Road

Chapter 4
SRTS Project Recommendations

Chapter 4 SRTS Project Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

A desirable component of any *SRTS* plan is to have a mix of both infrastructure related and non-infrastructure related project types. Obviously, the *SRTS* focus on the five E's is intended to complement this desire. The five E's are as follows:

Non-Infrastructure
- Education;
- Encouragement;
- Enforcement; and
- Evaluation.

Infrastructure
- Engineering.

Infrastructure projects are primarily engineering in nature, and are explained later in this chapter is **section 4.3**. However, engineering projects alone are not enough. A viable *SRTS* plan relies on a mix of the five E's. It is the intent of this chapter to present the various project recommendations resulting from the *SRTS* effort at the Evergreen Schools. Although the "engineering" recommendations are quite specific and site related, the other components incorporate a variety of education, enforcement, encouragement and evaluation items.

4.2 Non-infrastructure (Behavioral) Projects

This section describes, on a basic level, non-infrastructure (behavioral) projects that were identified and discussed at the SRTS workshop held with the Evergreen Community Partners / Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). As such, they have a good potential for being realized within the Schools SRTS program. Many other non-infrastructure ideas were presented to the group during the workshop, however some were deemed to be unachievable due to a variety of constraints and or concerns. As such, the listings in this section are those that are based on community support as defined at the SRTS workshop.

Mouse Behind the Wheel (Education Component)
This activity is intended as an educational activity for grades 1 & 2. It is literature based and is structured as a "read-aloud" of *Family Mouse Behind the Wheel* by Wolfgang Zuckermann (available from The Lutterworth Press, PO Box 60, Cambridge CB1 2NT, Copyright- EcoPlan International, 1992, ISBN 0-7188-22834-8). The objective is to read and discuss the story to give students an example of how our transportation choices affect our natural environment and our physical health as well as the power of community involvement and the dangers of over development. If the class has a place for a "read-aloud" (i.e. read-aloud corner, carpet, circle meeting area) this exercise can be incorporated into the individual teachers curriculum.

Stop, Look and Listen (Education Component)

This program is intended for 2nd graders and will introduce them to the Safe Routes to School program, encourage walking and biking and teach them how to cross the street safely. The program engages students through a class discussion, a seven-minute traffic-safety video, and an interactive game to teach these principles. This program is intended to be coupled with the *Walk Around the Block Neighborhood fieldtrip* program, described below. Students will be able to explain the benefits and hazards of walking, identify edges, and demonstrate the procedure of stopping at every edge and looking and listening for traffic before crossing the street.

Walk Around the Block Fieldtrip (Education Component)

This program is structured to teach students and have them practice the safe crossing procedure of stopping at the edge, looking left then right, then left again and listening for cars before crossing the street. This activity is the follow up to the Stop, Look and Listen activity and is intended for 2nd graders. The lesson emphasizes the importance of always stopping at every edge, looking and listening for moving cars.

Helmet Safety (Education Component)

This program is intended for 4th graders to demonstrate the importance of wearing a helmet. The program allows students to make the connection between wearing a helmet and avoiding death or permanent brain damage. In this program, a discussion on how a helmet works and how to properly fit a helmet in researched. Also, the story of a boy who was seriously injured in a bike crash is told.

Bicycle Rodeo (Education Component)

The bicycle rodeo is intended for 4th graders to teach children the importance of seeing, being seen, and remaining in control at all times when riding a bike. This is achieved through a series of bike handling drills and the simulation of traffic situations. This activity is a follow up activity to other programs focusing on helmet usage, basic safety strategy, laws and regulations.

Traffic Safety Quiz Show (Education Component)

The Traffic Safety Quiz show is patterned off of the television game show Jeopardy and is intended for grades 4 and 5 to demonstrate and develop bicycle and pedestrian safety knowledge. The class is divided into 2-4 teams of up to 10 students (usually named for one of the 4 fantastic reasons to walk/bike). The point system dynamic may be too competitive for some classrooms, in which case the questions in each category can be referred to as levels 1,2,3 and 4. The objective is to have the class answer questions about safe behavior, laws and rules for walking and bicycling. The object of the game is not which team scores the maximum points but how many students can ultimately answer all the questions correctly!

The Signs of Safety (Education Component)

This discussion and art activity is intended for grades 3 through 5 and prepares students for International Walk to School Day. The objective of this program is to prepare students by reviewing the Six Simple Steps to Staying Safe, and make signs and banners to improve visibility on International Walk to School Day. Generally, the art activity is set up in one area and the introductory discussions are set up in a different area away from the materials in order to avoid distraction.

International Walk-to-School Day (Education / Encouragement Component)

The International Walk-to-School day is held annually on the first Wednesday in October. The event is exciting and can be used to elevate the importance of walking and bicycling in a community. Some events include a free breakfast outside on school grounds, elected official participation, and prizes/awards. Often times, donations can be received from area businesses.

Walking School Bus (Education / Encouragement Component)

The walking school bus is a term for students and parents walking together in groups. Along the course of a route, there are "hand-off" points where a parent can turn the students over to each other. It does require a level of volunteer commitment to make sure parents are spaced adequately. The walking school bus is a good tool when parents in the community are concerned with safety in the adjacent neighborhoods, and also International Walk-to-School day is held annually on the first Wednesday in October. The event is exciting and can be used to elevate the importance of walking and bicycling in a community. Some events include a free breakfast outside on school grounds, elected official participation, and prizes/awards. Often times, donations can be received from area businesses.

Golden Sneaker Award (Encouragement Component)

The Golden Sneaker Award contest is a competition between homeroom classes that rewards the class with the greatest number of students who walk, bike, carpool or ride the bus to school in a given month. The class keeps track of how often its students commute by these modes at the end of each week, and calculates the totals per commute mode at the end of the month. The class with the most participation overall (regardless of the mode breakdown) wins the Golden Sneaker Award and gets to display their award throughout the month. They also win an ice cream or pizza party, or some other special classroom activity. This contest fosters teamwork and allows students who cannot walk or bike to school to participate in this group transportation contest. Some schools choose to "even out" the competition by splitting up the grades into more evenly matched levels that compete with each other. An example of grades that could compete against each other is: kindergarten and first graders, second and third graders, fourth and fifth graders. The contest can be conducted in both elementary and middle schools.

Frequent Rider Miles (Encouragement Component)

Frequent Rider Miles (FRM) is intended to be an annual contest held every spring and sponsored by Parent-Teachers Organization (PTO). The contest asks students to keep track of each time they walk, bike, carpool, or ride the bus to and from school. Every time a student accumulates 20 points, they receive both an instant reward from a "grab bag" and a raffle ticket, and get their name entered into a raffle to win valuable prizes. At the end of the contest a drawing is held to select the prize winners. The contest is set up to run for six weeks starting in late Spring (the beginning of April). However, each school can organize the contest for any length of time that they feel is appropriate.

Transportation Choices and the Environment (Education Component)

This program is geared towards 6th through 8th grades and uses overhead transparencies of graphs and charts which illustrate statistics pertaining to the impact which transportation and other energy choices have on our environment. The overheads are used to guide the discussion. The students then participate in small group discussions with the goal of generating questions based on their concerns for the future. Following the overhead presentation and whole class discussion, small discussion groups will each be responsible for generating at least one question about the future of energy or transportation. Groups record their questions; each group will share their questions with the whole class. Hold another whole group discussion to brainstorm answers and solutions. Also, this activity can be used to launch a research project.

Flashing Lights Incentive (Encouragement Component)

The City of Missoula and the public school district recently purchased small flashing red lights that students can carry with them as they walk and/or bike, and can clip on their back packs. The purchase of these devices for the Evergreen Schools would be a great encouragement incentive that could be handed out for their use. It is expected that up to 800 of these would be necessary to cover the entire school student population.

Speed Trailer Purchase (Enforcement Component)

The "speed trailer" is a good tool for law enforcement to use to inform and educate motorists of their instantaneous travel speed. They are typically placed at a sensitive location for a period of two or three days, upon which they are removed as to not lose their effectiveness. The potential exists that one or two trailers could be purchased, on behalf of the Flathead County Sheriff's office, for use in the Evergreen area. The Sheriff's office would be responsible for storage, set-up, maintenance, and placement of the trailer(s), however the trailer(s) could be allocated to the Evergreen Schools area exclusively.

Purchase of Solar Powered Speed Indicator (Enforcement & Education Component)

Solar powered speed indicators can be permanently attached to power poles, sign poles, and or their own pole. They are increasingly being used near school areas to inform motorists of their speeds. They could be purchased and attached by Flathead County along East Evergreen Drive, West Evergreen Drive and /or Helena Flats Road. Approval from the Flathead County Commission would likely be necessary for these since the three mentioned facilities are County roadways.

Law Enforcement "Coupons" (Encouragement Component)

One encouragement idea presented during the SRTS workshop for Evergreen Schools was that of purchasing ice cream cone "coupons" through a local business that could be distributed by local law enforcement personnel to students when they are observed "doing the right thing". This would put the students on notice that they are always being watched, and can help cultivate good relations between law enforcement and the students.

Public Service Announcements - Radio & TV (Education Component)

A good education program that will reach out to all residents in the area would be that of an aggressive public service announcement (PSA) campaign. Sample PSA's are available through other Safe Routes to School programs that set a structure and protocol for implementing an aggressive PSA. This campaign could include radio announcements informing motorists of the program and associated issues, especially around the Evergreen Schools. Motorist education is an important part of this program, and PSA's placed on the radio and select TV spots will help accomplish this educational objective.

4.3 Infrastructure Projects

The infrastructure projects listed in this section are those identified in the SRTS workshop and those which have a good chance of realizing implementation in the coming years. Although there are only eight (8) infrastructure projects listed herein, the completion of these projects will address the primary concerns voiced by community participants, and observed by the Consultant, related to student safety. The projects can be classified as short range (0 to 2 years), medium range (2 – 5 years), and long range (greater than 5 years).

It is important to recognize that not all of the infrastructure projects are currently eligible for the Montana program Safe Routes to School funding pool. Even so, the projects are included herein as beneficial, and other funding mechanisms should be explored to make the project a reality. The projects being recommended are noted as "eligible" or "non-eligible" for current Montana program SRTS funds.

Project INF-1: **Fencing re-configuration at southeast corner of Evergreen Drive/LaSalle Road**
(SHORT RANGE)

Background: A significant amount of student pedestrian and bicycle movements occur at the intersection of Evergreen Drive and LaSalle Road. Most of this travel occurs across the south leg of LaSalle Road and the east leg of East Evergreen Drive. After school gets out for the day, students stack up at the southwest corner of the intersection waiting for the traffic signal and crossing guard to allow them to cross.
Issues: Because of the way the chain link fencing is constructed at this corner of the intersection, students are crammed into a small area, which presents problems when eastbound to southbound right-turning traffic off of West Evergreen Drive travels over the curb and gutter/sidewalk area.

Recommendation: Modify the school chain link fencing at the southwest corner of the intersection of West Evergreen Drive and LaSalle Road such that it is located farther away from the southwest corner of the intersection. This will provide more room for the waiting students, and help increase the distance between the roadway and the area where the students wait for the light to change. This should be considered a "short-range" temporary solution that will allow improved safety for waiting students while funding is secured for more extensive projects within and around the intersection (described later in this section).
Montana SRTS Program Funding Status: Eligible

Project INF-2: **Traffic Calming Features (w/new crosswalk) along East Evergreen Drive**
(MEDIUM RANGE)

Background: East Evergreen Drive is in the process of obtaining a separated bicycle path along the roadway between the two schools. This is a CTEP project that is currently under design. There are, however, some significant student crossings along East Evergreen Drive, especially at the intersection with Birch Drive.
Issues: The unmarked crossing of students along East Evergreen Drive is problematic due to speeds of vehicles along the corridors, and the unmarked locations. There is a heavy student population base south of East Evergreen Drive that will continue the crossings of the roadway once the CTEP project is completed.
Recommendation: It is recommended that a new marked crosswalk be installed along East Evergreen Drive with appropriate signage and minor traffic calming features. Traffic calming will be difficult here due to the very narrow roadway width. The most logical traffic calming features would be either narrow curb bulb-outs in the vicinity of the new crosswalk, and/or very narrow splitter islands in the center of the street. The latter will have issues related to snow plowing and vehicles changing directions. It is suggested that the new crosswalk, and signage, be near the intersection of East Evergreen Drive with Birch Drive.
Montana SRTS Program Funding Status: Eligible

Project INF-3: **West Evergreen Drive – Separated Bicycle/Pedestrian Path**
(MEDIUM RANGE)

Background: West Evergreen Drive is a very narrow roadway facility that does not have any pedestrian/bicycle facilities in place.
Issues: The lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities along West Evergreen Drive causes concerns with students walking along the shoulder and being forced to cross the roadway at unmarked locations at the discretion of available gaps in the traffic stream. A strong student population base is located both north and south of West Evergreen Drive.
Recommendation: It is recommended that a new separated bicycle/pedestrian path be planned for, designed and constructed along West Evergreen Drive, between Kings Way and LaSalle Road. This path should be of similar geometry and function as the soon-to-be-constructed path on East Evergreen Drive. Additionally, a marked crosswalk with appropriate signage should be installed near Kings Way (if the path is to be located along the south side of the roadway). It is assumed that right-of-way would not be required if

the path was placed on the north side of the roadway to mimic the alignment currently planned for the CTEP project on East Evergreen Drive. If the path is placed on both the north and south sides of West Evergreen Drive, it is likely that some right-of-way acquisition will be required.
Montana SRTS Program Funding Status: Eligible
Additional Information: A rough assessment was made to determine what amount of right-of-way exists along the West Evergreen corridor and whether any constraints would likely be encountered based on this conceptual recommendation. Generally speaking, it appears from research of the Flathead County GIS maps that a sixty-foot (60') right-of-way standard is found between King's Way and LaSalle Road. There are a few isolated deviations from this that should be recognized. These primarily are found along a small segment just east of the railroad tracks, as well as a small segment just west of the railroad tracks to Kings Way.

East of the railroad tracks, it appears that the existing right-of-way is narrower on the north side of the road centerline, and wider on the south side of the roadway centerline. Preliminary measurements suggest available right-of-way to be 25 feet on the north side and 35 feet on the south side. This staggered right-of-way is only for a length of about 100 feet east of the railroad tracks. At that point the right-of-way widths appear to go back to 30 feet on both sides of the roadway centerline.

West of the railroad tracks, it appears that the only official right-of-way is a 30 foot swath on the north side of the roadway centerline. The 30 feet on the south side of the roadway centerline appears to be an easement.

It would be desirable, and is the suggestion for this project, to place the separated bicycle/pedestrian path on the north side of the roadway facility to eliminate the need for a pedestrian crossing along West Evergreen Drive. In this circumstance, pedestrians on the north side would walk to LaSalle Road before crossing to the junior high school.

Project INF-4: **Shady Lane Connection**
(LONG RANGE)

Background: Shady Lane creates a "tee" intersection with MT Highway 35. The intersection was recently signalized, which has changed travel patterns immensely. There is a significant school population that lives south of Shady Lane.
Issues: The lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities along Shady Lane between MT Highway 35 and the *Boys and Girls Club* creates unsafe conditions with students walking along roadside edges. Also, crossing MT Highway 35 at the Shady lane signalized intersection stops traffic, however once across MT Highway 35 there are no connections for students to traverse.
Recommendation: It is recommended that a new separated bicycle/pedestrian path be planned for, designed and constructed along Shady Lane between the *Boys and Girls Club* and MT Highway 35. On the north side of MT Highway 35, a path should be explored that will connect to the residential neighborhood off of Park Avenue. It appears a short segment in this area may be feasible between MT Highway 35 and the southern

90 degree bend of Park Avenue, although right-of-way needs and private land ownership are undefined at this time.
Montana SRTS Program Funding Status: Eligible

Project INF-5: **Intersection Re-Configuration of LaSalle Road & Evergreen Drive**
(LONG RANGE)

Background: The primary intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive has alignment issues on the Evergreen Drive approaches. Curb radii are also tight and cause vehicles to track around the corners.
Issues: The west and east approaches along Evergreen Drive are not aligned opposite of each other, and are both very narrow given the influx of school related traffic. Problems exist when left-turning traffic on each approach blocks the thru-movement traffic. When this happens, vehicles skirt around the left-turning cars and often track into the existing crosswalks on both legs of LaSalle Road.
Recommendation: It is recommended that the intersection be substantially reconstructed. This is a long-range project. The intersection should, at a minimum, have designated left-turn bays in each direction of travel along Evergreen Drive, coupled with a combination thru- and right-turn lane along Evergreen Drive. Reconstruction of curb radii would be necessary to accommodate potential turning vehicles. Note that the need for designated left-turn arrows would have to be evaluated after traffic patterns normalize for the westbound and eastbound left-turn movements along Evergreen Drive. This is a long term, significant project that is needed for traffic flow more than student safety. It will require additional right-of-way, and project development and construction activities will be costly.
Montana SRTS Program Funding Status: Not Eligible

Project INF-6: **Decorative, Low level Corridor Lighting Along Evergreen Drive**
(LONG RANGE)

Background: Corridor lighting is generally absent in most areas of the Evergreen community. During a majority of the school year, dark conditions exist for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling to the schools, especially during the AM hour.
Issues: The extensive dark period during the late Fall and winter months make low-level corridor lighting beneficial. This is especially true along Evergreen Drive. Visibility is a real issue that was brought forward by many workshop participants during the SRTS workshop and other public outreach.
Recommendation: It is recommended that low-level, decorative corridor lighting be planned for the full length of Evergreen Drive, between Helena Flats Road and LaSalle Road. It should also be planned for the segment between LaSalle Road and Kings Way (project INF-3). This is a long-range project that is intended to light the future pedestrian paths only, and not the entire roadway corridor.
Montana SRTS Program Funding Status: Not Eligible

Project INF-7: **Re-configure Evergreen School Parking Lot to provide An Additional Access to LaSalle Road**
(SHORT RANGE)

Background: There is currently only one ingress/egress into the Evergreen School parking lot. This generally works satisfactorily, unless there is inclement weather or major after school activities.
Issues: During after school activities, and also during inclement weather when parents tend to drive back and forth to school, parking lot congestion results in unsafe conditions for the students. Emergency service access is also somewhat compromised due to only one access point.
Recommendation: It is recommended that an additional access be provided to LaSalle Road to allow right-turn egress only out of the parking lot. There had been an access at one time in the general location as shown on Figure 4-1, however it was a "full movement" approach that began to cause operational concerns along LaSalle Road due to increasing traffic volumes and close proximity to the intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive. The new recommended access is suggested to be "right out" only, such that travel characteristics along LaSalle Road is not compromised.
Montana SRTS Program Funding Status: Not Eligible

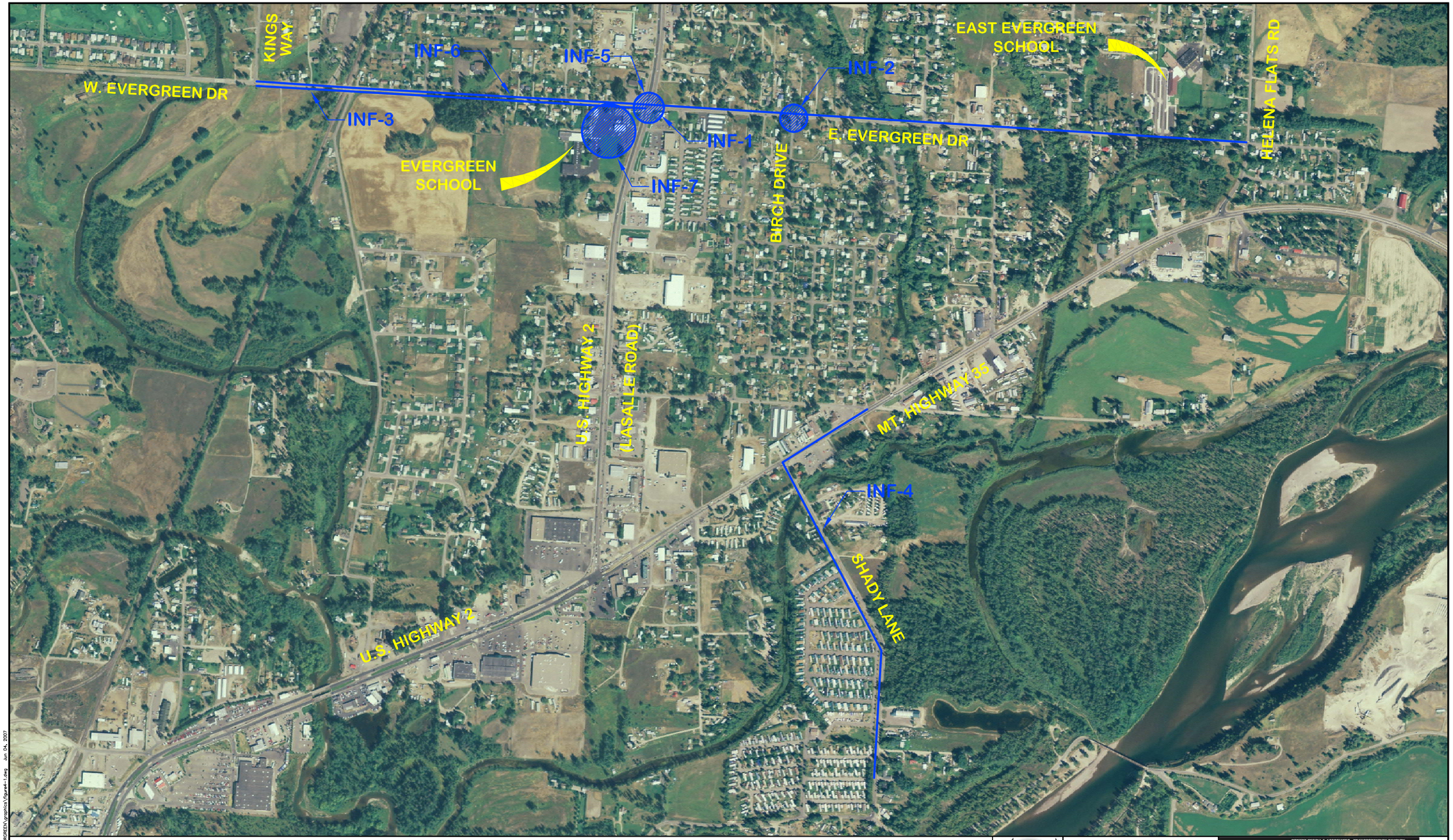


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FIGURE 4-1 STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

ROBERT PECCIA & ASSOCIATES
825 Custer Ave, Helena
100 Cooperative Way, Ste. 200, Kalispell
Civil, Environmental, and Transportation
Engineers and Land Surveyors

ROBERT PECCIA & ASSOCIATES - TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

EVERGREEN SCHOOLS
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS) STUDY

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Chapter 5
Implementation Strategies & Funding Sources

Chapter 5 Implementation Strategies & Funding Sources

5.1 Implementation Strategies

Implementing SRTS at the Evergreen Schools is about translating the ideas and recommendations developed in this plan into real actions and projects. Critical to implementing the plan is developing a strategy to make ongoing and continuous progress toward meeting the goals and objectives to better improve student safety.

To accomplish this, the SRTS Team will need to discuss and identify:

- What projects or activities will be the priorities;
- Who will be partners for the projects;
- Who will be responsible for completing projects and activities;
- Potential funding sources for activities and projects;
- A desired timeline for completing SRTS activities and projects; and
- Ways to sustain ongoing SRTS efforts.

The process for implementing SRTS will vary depending on the availability of resources to get activities or projects underway. For example, holding a bicycle rodeo requires considerably less effort and resources to implement than a project intended to develop a new shared use path along West Evergreen Drive. In most instances, focusing on simple and easily accomplished tasks may be the best way to begin SRTS implementation efforts. Making small, immediate changes and publicizing positive outcomes will allow the community to see the results of this SRTS effort and help create the momentum and support needed to implement more costly and substantive changes.

A good way to begin making positive changes in the community is to conduct a kick-off event or special activity at school. This event can be used as an opportunity to showcase the previous planning efforts and SRTS program. All should be invited, including the media, local decision-makers, parents, school staff, the SRTS Team and, of course, children. This event could be held in conjunction with another well recognized event like *International Walk-to-School Day* or *Earth Day*.

Setting Priorities

Determining priorities helps direct resources and efforts to the activities and projects that matter most to SRTS stakeholders and that will have the greatest impact on children walking and bicycling to school. Think about why you became interested in SRTS, revisit your goals and objectives to see what you hoped to accomplish, and assess the ability of your recommended activities and projects to make a difference for children walking and bicycling to school.

Start by reviewing the list of recommended SRTS infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects contained in **Chapter 4**, and decide which activities or projects should be implemented first. Recognize that some things may be easily fixed, such as changing

fencing on a property corner or installing new bicycle racks. Other factors that may help determine how readily projects can be implemented include:

- whether or not additional right-of-way or easements are needed;
- whether opportunities to "piggyback" improvements on other projects exist;
- public opinion; and
- the overall cost and availability of funding sources.

Some projects, like constructing a new separated bicycle path, will require more time to gather support and funding and to actually get accomplished. Such projects take longer because they require planning, design and construction and may require cooperation among different governmental agencies. However, it is important for the SRTS Team to start building support and pursuing necessary funding for the "long-term" projects as soon as possible.

In some cases, it may be appropriate to implement temporary solutions to identified problems. This may be an obvious choice in instances where it is known that a road or street may be rebuilt soon, but pedestrian or bicyclist safety needs must be immediately addressed. Temporary installations present opportunities to test more permanent solutions or to gauge public acceptance of an improvement strategy. However, in most cases, implementing a permanent solution should be sought.

Finding Partners for SRTS Projects

Implementation of SRTS programs typically occurs on several levels. The Evergreen Schools SRTS Team will need to take the lead in organizing a variety of partners to get the work done. This includes working with the MDT or other state agencies, the Evergreen School District, Flathead County and law enforcement agencies, community groups or neighborhood associations, the local business community, and/or with other organizations throughout Montana that support safety-based programs. One of the strengths of SRTS programs is that there are <u>many</u> potential partners for projects and activities.

Implementing the Evergreen Schools SRTS plan will be a collective effort and requires that partnerships be established with various SRTS stakeholders to combine efforts for maximum efficiency and effectiveness. Parents, school officials, local government officials, law enforcement personnel and other stakeholders should be contacted to inform them of the proposed improvements, and short-term and long-term priorities, as well as how they can help your SRTS efforts.

Establishing Implementation Responsibilities

The Evergreen Schools SRTS Team must be an advocate for the activities and projects presented in **Chapter 4** and may be able to help secure the resources needed for SRTS actions. However, actually implementing the activities or projects will likely be the responsibility of others like individual teachers at the schools, the school board, the

Evergreen Community Partners / Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), or Flathead County. Different entities may also be responsible for various components of the same project. For example, developing a new pathway or trail could affect a road under MDT's jurisdiction, cross local streets, and require construction on school property.

For these reasons, it is essential to clearly establish the roles and the responsibilities for implementation among those involved in the Evergreen Schools SRTS activities and projects. Cooperative agreements may be needed in some cases to identify project roles and responsibilities, describe how involved parties will work together to complete the activity or project, and specify funding contributions.

Finding Funding Sources

Finding funds for SRTS activities and projects will be an ongoing effort that requires cooperation of various stakeholders and government agencies. As discussed in **section 5.2** later in this chapter, funding SRTS involves matching identified needs with grant programs, securing safety funds from schools or local governments, seeking contributions of funds or services from organizations or private donors, or even holding your own fundraising events. There is no easy and quick way to find funding sources for SRTS. It takes considerable time and effort to find funding sources so it's important not to get discouraged if you come up short.

Because the Evergreen Schools SRTS programs includes actions ranging from education efforts and encouragement activities to enforcement operations and engineering improvements, the potential funding sources for these program areas are fairly diverse. One of the key reasons often cited for the success of SRTS programs is being creative and flexible in securing funding and interacting with local agencies. SRTS funding opportunities are constantly changing so it pays to keep searching for potential funding sources.

Setting a Timeframe for Your Actions

The timeframe required to accomplish your recommendations presented in **Chapter 4** will vary and depend on project priorities and the ability to find partners and the necessary funding. Generally, the improvements requiring the least amount of time and resources should be completed first, and those that require the most should be completed later as resources allow.

The time required to complete some SRTS projects may depend on the scheduled implementation dates for other planned projects. During initial data collection phases for a specific project, it must be identified who maintains jurisdiction over the roads and streets near the schools and whether improvements to these facilities are scheduled in the near future. As the implementation process is started, the SRTS Team will want to go back to those with jurisdictional authority to request help in getting the projects built—either by themselves or along with already planned improvement projects. The timeframe for implementation will depend on the response from the various entities.

Timing to implement projects may also depend on government funding cycles and the time required to apply for and receive funds through assistance or grant programs. It pays to keep current on application periods and deadlines for annual funding applications.

Project development and implementation activities often take time. Infrastructure projects using Federal-aid must conform to all federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to environmental compliance, design, contract letting, and construction administration. The time required to adequately meet these requirements needs to be considered when establishing schedules for completing projects.

Sustaining SRTS

Implementing projects and activities to meet all of the Evergreen Schools SRTS objectives may take many years to complete. Therefore, it is critical to sustain energy and interest in the program over the long term, particularly as members of the SRTS Team, school administrators, and local decision makers change. The most effect way to accomplish this is to build a broad base of support within the community and focus on small successes. Some other ideas to keep the Evergreen Schools SRTS program going include:

- **Identify additional program champions.** A Principal and/or teacher at the school who champions the program—he or she will be able to sustain the program over a long period.

- **Publicize your activities and successes.** Get visibility for activities through local media and school communications and publicize your activities. Making the work fun and positive helps ensure people will want to continue working on SRTS and may encourage others to become involved. Ask to frequently make reports at local school board or parent group meetings.

- **Encourage policy changes.** You may be able to realize long-lasting positive effects by working together with your school, school district or local government to establish policies that support children walking and bicycling to school. For example, local planning departments can adopt policies that ensure that non-motorized uses like walking and bicycling are accommodated in new developments, particularly residential areas near schools. School districts could also adopt a curriculum that ensures pedestrian and bicycle safety education.

- **Consider creating a permanent SRTS committee.** A permanent committee within your local PTA, school board, or pedestrian safety group means that SRTS will continue to receive attention and energy.

Final Thoughts on Implementation

Keep children involved. Children can be effective campaigners and initiators as evidenced by their successful involvement with past antismoking and recycling campaigns.
Involve Parents. Without parental support, nothing really changes. Speaking and meeting with other parent groups will provide you with ideas you might like to try in your community; it can also give your project team some necessary inspiration and support.

Empower your SRTS Team. Make sure you have the right players on the team who can help with access to information or the media, who know about funding sources, and who understand the process required to develop and implement physical improvements.

Finding and keeping volunteers. Finding volunteers is easier if the program is arranged so that volunteers are required immediately before and after school. Offer child care as a way to encourage volunteers. Organize your efforts so volunteer commitments require only short, manageable obligations. Spend time with volunteers and provide some SRTS training. Training increases the commitment a volunteer feels towards the project, reduces turnover, and strengthens your program.

Recognize when outside help is needed. Some projects may require specialized help (like traffic engineers) to analyze situations and develop appropriate solutions. This could require entering into professional service contracts to get the work done. School Boards or local government have the staff and expertise necessary to draft and execute such contracts.

Be persistent! Some of your ideas or recommendations may take some time and education to generate the necessary support.

5.2 Funding Sources

Funding the Evergreen Schools SRTS projects involves identifying needs and setting priorities, matching identified needs with applicable grant programs, and allocating available transportation funds for pedestrian and bicyclist safety improvements in a cost-effective manner. Considering how funding opportunities change, it is essential to explore as many sources as possible. Some elements of the Evergreen Schools SRTS program will cost very little. Many low-cost solutions like new fencing or painting crosswalks can be quickly implemented. Alternately, some projects like the construction of new bicycle paths may require large amounts of funding.

Most SRTS projects rely on a mixture of funding from a variety of sources including:

- City and County funding
- School Districts
- State programs (like SRTS and CTEP)

- Other Federal-aid highway programs allocated through SAFETEA-LU
- Environmental and air quality funds
- Health and safety organization funds
- Grants from philanthropic organizations
- Private donations

SRTS programs make use of infrastructure and non-infrastructure funds. Infrastructure funds are typically used to make physical improvements benefiting pedestrians and bicyclists around schools and along school routes. These funds include many actions and projects intended to enhance the walking and bicycling environment for students such as installing sidewalks or crosswalks, fixing hazardous facilities, or implementing traffic calming measures near schools. Infrastructure funds usually come from local governments or from federal and state programs.

Non-infrastructure funds are used to implement evaluation, education, encouragement, and enforcement activities for SRTS programs. These activities might consist of assessments to identify and monitor problems, in-school safety education, health and environment training, public outreach activities, traffic enforcement, train-the-trainer safety programs and other related activities.

Local governments may choose to fund SRTS efforts or organizers can seek financial contributions from other groups. Some local non-profit groups may be willing to help fund SRTS efforts because the programs can benefit the community as a whole by relieving traffic congestion, improving the environment, creating alternative transportation routes, and improving the overall health of local residents.

Both infrastructure and non-infrastructure funds are available from numerous sources, including Montana's Safe Routes to School program. Notable SRTS funding resources are discussed below.

Local Funding Resources

Most facilities, provisions, and programs for pedestrians and bicyclists are implemented at the city or county level. Common sources of local funding for improvements that may benefit SRTS programs are discussed below.

Local Revenues. The primary local revenue sources of cities, towns, and counties are general funds resulting from mill levies on real and personal property and motor vehicles; licenses and permits; state and federal intergovernmental revenues; intergovernmental fund transfers; and charges for services. Although most of the general fund monies designated for roads or streets are oriented toward maintenance activities, some new construction and improvement projects may be financed with such funds through agencies like the Publics Works or Parks Department. Since demand for funds often exceeds available revenues, designing and building new pedestrian and bicycle facilities may not always be high priorities for many local governments.

Most local governments have street or road departments that may be able to help complete some inexpensive SRTS improvements such as striping crosswalks, installing signs, or marking bicycle lanes on local roads or streets with adequate width.

Fuel Tax Revenues. The State of Montana currently assesses a tax of $0.27 per gallon on gasoline and diesel fuel used for transportation purposes. Each incorporated city and town and county receives a portion of the total tax funds allocated based on formulas considering its population, street or road mileage, and land area (for counties only) relative to all other incorporated cities and towns or counties.

All fuel tax funds allocated to city and county governments must be used for the construction, reconstruction, maintenance, and repair of city streets and alleys or rural roads. The funds may also be used for the share that the city or county might otherwise expend for proportionate matching of Federal funds allocated for the construction of roads or streets on the Primary, Secondary, or Urban Systems.

Priorities for the use of fuel tax revenue are established by the cities and counties receiving them.

Special Bond Issues. Revenues for improving walking and bicycling conditions can also be generated through bond issues. Cities have commonly floated bonds for their urban parks, trails and other recreational amenities. Increasingly, bond issues are being used to secure open space, develop trails and paths, and implement other improvements benefiting pedestrians and bicyclists. Several local governments in Montana including the City of Helena and Gallatin, Missoula and Ravalli Counties have passed such bond issues.

Other Specialized Taxes. Other specialized tax revenues can improve pedestrian and bicyclist facilities. For example, the City of Whitefish is designated as a "resort community" and under Montana law is authorized to levy taxes on goods and services related to tourism. The City uses these resort tax revenues for property tax relief and to fund infrastructure improvements including the development of pedestrian/bicycle trails.

Some communities have also enacted tax increment districts to collect additional revenues on properties within a prescribed area. The revenue generated through such taxes is designated for infrastructure improvements and other projects within the district.

Primary State Funding Resources for SRTS

Montana's SRTS Program. Federal legislation in August 2005 created a national Safe Routes to Schools Program and authorized funding for the program through the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users Act* (SAFETEA-LU). Along with other Federal-aid highway apportionments, the State of Montana receives an annual funding apportionment for SRTS from the FHWA. Montana's annual SRTS apportionment is approximately $1 million for fiscal years 2005-2009.

Montana's SRTS Program provides funding for non-infrastructure and infrastructure projects through a competitive application process. Non-infrastructure (behavioral) projects include community assessments, development of community action plans, tracking and performance monitoring, public awareness campaigns, bicycle and pedestrian safety, health and environment training, incentive programs, and enforcement efforts. Infrastructure projects include crosswalks, sidewalks, pathways, and bike racks. All infrastructure projects must be publicly accessible, within two miles of a K–8 school, and maintained by a local or tribal government.

Applications for SRTS funding must be prepared and submitted to MDT. Eligible applicants for SRTS infrastructure funding include local and tribal governments and school districts. Eligible applicants for non-infrastructure funding include state, local, tribal and regional agencies, school districts, private schools, and nonprofit organizations.

The Montana's SRTS Program is a 100-percent federally funded reimbursement program and does not require a local match. Recipients of SRTS funds must front the cost of the project and will be reimbursed during the course of the project. All costs submitted for reimbursement are subject to eligibility requirements. Any costs incurred before written MDT authorization for the project are not eligible for reimbursement.

Successful local efforts will use SRTS Program funds to attract, combine and apply other funding resources to help accomplish needed SRTS projects and activities. The amount of funds available through Montana's SRTS Program will help get a good start on SRTS efforts but is unlikely to be enough of a financial resource to help achieve all of Evergreen's goals and objectives. For this reason, applicants are encouraged to maximize SRTS projects by combining SRTS funding with other funding sources, like local allocations from Montana's Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP). More information about CTEP funds follows.

For additional information about Montana's SRTS program and its requirements, go to **http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/saferoutes/** or contact MDT's **Safe Routes to School Coordinator** at 1-877-935-SAFE (7233).

Montana's Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP). MDT is responsible for administering federal funds allocated to the state for transportation-related projects designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of Montana's multimodal transportation system. Federal legislation requires that 10% of the Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds each state receives annually must be spent on eligible projects in 12 designated Transportation Enhancement categories. Three of the CTEP eligibility categories could relate directly to activities associated with SRTS programs including:

- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use for pedestrian or bicycle trails)
- Safety education activities for pedestrians and bicyclists

Public pedestrian and bicycle routes, pathways, and walkways are eligible for CTEP funding. Funds can also be used for construction of new, or replacement of old, sidewalks on publicly owned property or easements. Facilities may be used for bicycles and/or pedestrians and should primarily be for general transportation from one point to another and not for recreational purposes. Other eligible uses of CTEP funds include bicycle racks, benches for pedestrian or bicyclist use, and other bicyclist- or pedestrian-related amenities.

The CTEP program is not a grant program. It is a federally-funded reimbursement program and requires a local match of 13.42%. The MDT has elected to sub-allocate transportation enhancement funds to local and tribal governments for selection and prioritization of local CTEP projects. Funds are distributed to the eligible local governments based on population figures from the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Communities seeking Montana's SRTS Program funds are encouraged to prioritize their CTEP allocations for bicycle and pedestrian facilities close to schools. Ideally, both programs will complement each other with the majority of funding for infrastructure coming from locally prioritized CTEP allocations and funding for the evaluation, education, enforcement, and encouragement components coming from the SRTS Program.

For additional information about Montana's CTEP program and its requirements, go to **http://www.mdt.mt.gov/business/ctep/default.shtml** or contact program staff at (406) 444-4221.

Other Federal-aid Highway Funding Programs

Bicycling and walking are recognized by the U.S. Department of Transportation as important elements of an integrated, inter-modal transportation system. Building sidewalks, teaching children to ride and walk safely, installing curb cuts and ramps for wheelchairs, striping bicycle lanes and building trails all contribute to meeting national transportation goals. For these reasons, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure may also be developed in association with projects receiving other categories of Federal-aid transportation funding.

As with the SRTS and CTEP funds, the FHWA (and MDT) administers a variety of other Federal transportation funds authorized by SAFETEA-LU. A description of each source follows.

State Highway System Funding. Federal transportation funds are available for designated state highway systems in Montana including the Interstate System, National Highway System (NHS) and Primary (STPP), Secondary (STPS), and Urban (STPU) Systems. While program requirements vary somewhat by system, activities eligible for funding typically includes construction, reconstruction, resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation work and operational improvements. Projects may include components that provide or enhance pedestrian and bicyclist facilities.

Improvements to these systems are funded with both federal and state funding. The federal share of funding for projects on the NHS, STPP, STPS, and STPU Systems is 86.58% and the State is responsible for the remaining share of 13.42%. Funding for projects on each highway system are generally allocated to five financial districts in the state based on project priorities or processes established by the Montana Transportation Commission. STPU funds are allocated only to the 15 designated urban communities in Montana.

MDT and county commissions cooperatively determine priorities for projects on the STPS System in each financial district and priorities for the use of STPU funds are established at the local level through local planning processes.

STPHS - Surface Transportation Program - Hazard Elimination. The purpose of the Federal Hazard Elimination Program is to identify hazardous locations throughout the states highway system, assign benefit/cost ratio priorities for the correction of these hazards, and implement a schedule of projects for their improvements. Hazard Elimination projects are funded with 90% Federal funds and 10% State funds.

Projects eligible for funding under the Hazard Elimination Program include any safety improvement project on any public road; any public surface transportation facility or any publicly owned bicycle or pedestrian pathway or trail; or any traffic calming measure. MDT's Traffic & Safety Bureau selects the projects by identifying high hazard sites through the analysis of law enforcement accident reports. Sites with a cluster of accidents over time are field reviewed and an appropriate type of corrective action is determined.

The cost of the proposed Hazard Elimination project is compared to the potential benefit of the action. Once the benefit/cost ratio is calculated for all high hazard sites statewide, the projects are prioritized from highest to lowest and the projects are funded in this order until the yearly funds are exhausted.

CMAQ – Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement Program. Federal funds available under this program are used to finance transportation projects and programs to help meet the requirements of the *Clean Air Act*. Eligible activities include transit improvements, traffic signal synchronization, bicycle and pedestrian projects, intersection improvements, travel demand management strategies, traffic flow improvements, and public fleet conversions to cleaner fuels. A requirement for the use of these funds is the estimation of the reduction in pollutants resulting from implementing the program/project.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities and programs may include the following activities:

- Constructing bicycle and pedestrian facilities (paths, bike racks, support facilities, etc.) that are not exclusively recreational and reduce vehicle trips.
- Non-construction outreach related to safe bicycle use.

At the project level, the use of CMAQ funds is not limited to a particular system (i.e. Primary, Urban, and National Highway System). The Federal share for most eligible projects is generally 80 percent.

CMAQ funds were initially designated for use only in areas designated as non-attainment areas or maintenance areas for national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) pollutants (ozone, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter). Under these criteria, relatively few areas in Montana were designated as non-attainment areas and eligible to receive CMAQ funds. Currently, there are only 12 communities in Montana designated as non-attainment areas for vehicle-related pollutants (carbon monoxide or particulates). Federal funding requirements have become somewhat more flexible in recent years under SAFETEA-LU. Each state is guaranteed a minimum apportionment of from the total CMAQ program funding, regardless of whether the State has any non-attainment or maintenance areas. Program funds can now be used anywhere in the state for any type of federal-aid highway project.

MDT has chosen to take advantage of this increased flexibility to proactively address air quality and automobile congestion problems throughout the state. To do this, the MDT has created the Montana Air & Congestion Initiative (MACI) Discretionary and Guaranteed programs.

Montana Air & Congestion Initiative (MACI) – Discretionary Program. The MACI – Discretionary Program provides funding for projects in areas of the state that are designated non-attainment or recognized as being "high-risk" for becoming non-attainment. Eligible activities include intersection improvements, signal synchronization projects, the purchase of sweepers and flush trucks. District Administrators and local governments nominate projects cooperatively. Projects are prioritized and selected based on air quality benefits and other factors. Sidewalk projects are often funded under the MACI program.

Other State Funding Resources

Recreational Trails Program Funds. SAFETEA-LU also provides funding for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) administered by the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). RTP funds (in the form of grants) can be used for non-motorized or motorized, multiple-use, community, rural and backcountry trails.

Several SRTS activities may be eligible projects under the RTP including:

- Operation of trails-related environmental protection and safety education programs.
- Development of urban trail linkages near homes and work places. Providing features to assist disabled individuals.
- Signs and other traffic control devices.

RTP grant applicants can include federal, state, county or municipal agencies, private associations and clubs. The FWP relies on a citizen-based State Trails Advisory Committee for advice on trail program funding decisions and related issues. RTP grants may not exceed 80% of the total of an individual project and funding is provided as a reimbursement for project expenditures incurred. Applicants should be aware of program requirements and contact and discuss potential projects with FWP staff before applying for RTP funds.

More information about the Montana's Recreational Trails Program can be found online at: **http://fwp.mt.gov/parks/grants/rtp/default.html** or by contacting Clint Blackwood (406) (444-4585) or Steve Gilbert (406) (444-7642).

Land & Water Conservation Fund Program – LWCF. The *Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 196*5 established a federal grants program encouraging a full partnership between national, state, and local governments in planning and funding outdoor recreation projects. The LWCF Program in Montana is administered by MFWP.

The LWCF Program provides grants for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and outdoor facilities. Eligible applicants include incorporated cities or towns, counties, school districts, state agencies, and tribal governments. LWCF funds are awarded through a competitive grant application process in order to distribute funding equitably.

The kinds of projects that have been approved and funded by LWCF in the past include such facilities as ball fields, open space acquisitions, golf courses, public parks, swimming pools, skating rinks, picnic facilities, playground equipment, snowmobile facilities and walking trails. As with RTP funding, applicants should be aware of program requirements and discuss potential projects with MFWP staff before applying for funds.

More information about the LWCF Program can be found online at: **http://fwp.mt.gov/parks/grants/lwcf/default.html** or by contacting the Helena Headquarters of Montana State Parks at (406) 444-3750.

Private Funding

Private funding can be useful for the implementation of SRTS programs. Private funding for SRTS programs may come in the form of dedications, exactions, monetary contributions, corporate underwriting, donations of right-of-way, and construction of new facilities to required city or county standards. Several forms of private financing for transportation improvements that could benefit SRTS are described in this section.

Developer Impact Fees. Private development can make valuable contributions to bicycle and pedestrian systems. Accessible bicycle and walking paths are highly valued amenities for new homebuyers. Developers who either pay for or construct pathways, or who contribute development impact fees for the construction of such facilities are making wise investments that will directly benefit their developments and their clients.

New developments, both residential and commercial, place a strain on existing public facilities, such as parks and streets. Development impact fees are paid by developers to help cover the additional costs resulting from new construction, and these funds may be used for the provision of paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks built as part of the required roadway cross-section. In some circumstances, shared use paths have been constructed by jurisdictions using impact fees if they serve transportation needs generated by the new development.

Donations from Local Businesses. Local industries and private businesses may agree to provide support for SRTS programs through donations of cash to help fund specific improvements; donations of services to reduce the cost of program implementation including equipment and labor to construct improvements, prizes for encouragement activities, or other services.

Funding from Private Corporations and Foundations. SRTS funding may also be available from private foundations, corporations, and conservation-minded benefactors. For example, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provides funds to non-profit organizations and public agencies for projects that improve health and health care in the U.S.. SRTS projects would generally be compatible with one of the Foundations primary goals of promoting "healthy communities and lifestyles."

Additionally, the Bikes Belong Coalition also offers a grant program for non-profit organizations and agencies within the United States that are committed to increasing bicycling. The Coalition offers grants for bicycle education, new facility construction, and advocacy.

Other potential funding sources can be researched on the internet at the website for "The Foundation Center" (http://lnps.fdncenter.org).

Individual Contributions/Events. Statistically, individuals give more money than corporations and foundations combined. Therefore, a local fund drive may be a good way to generate funding for SRTS activities. Special events like walk-a-thons or a bike-a-thons or more traditional fundraising activities like bake sales, concerts, etc. can also help generate SRTS funds.

Parent/Teacher Groups and School Districts. Many Parent/Teacher groups have funds to distribute to school programs and often schools have safety funding. These potential funding sources should be investigated as part of the SRTS effort.

Technical Appendix

Appendix A

- **Meeting Minutes (10/17/06)**

Kalispell Area Transportation Plan (2006 Update)

"Safe Routes to School" Outreach Activity Number 1 Evergreen School Parent-Teachers Organization (PTO) (October 17th, 2006)

A public outreach activity was held on Tuesday, October 17th, 2006, for the "Safe Routes to School" study being developed for the Evergreen Schools. The meeting coincided with the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Evergreen Schools "Parent-Teacher Organization". The meeting began at 6:30 p.m. and concluded at approximately 8:30 p.m. The meeting was held in the Board Room of the Evergreen School's Administration building, and was attended by about 45 members of the community. Sign-in sheets were passed around, which recorded approximately 31 individuals, however it was estimated another 10 to 15 individuals (including the consultant team and others) did not sign-in.

The meeting began with Darla Harmon making introductions and thanking people for attending. Darla is the Evergreen Community Partners Chairwoman, and has been an active advocate for this project. Ms. Harmon introduced the Montana Department of Transportation Director, Jim Lynch, to say a few words before beginning the formal presentation. Director Lynch talked about the Safe Routes to School program, how pleased he is that MDT is having a direct involvement in this study, and how the community should be engaged over this issue. He further went on to state that one of his personal directives has been to conduct more outreach to the various communities in the state, and as such was pleased to be to attend the Evergreen Schools meeting.

After Director Lynch concluded his comments, Ms. Harmon then introduced Jeff Key, project manager for this project from Robert Peccia & Associates. Mr. Key proceeded with a formal power point presentation to the audience (included in these minutes at the end of the comment portion), followed by a "question and answer" session.

Issues and comments made from the meeting attendees, both during and after the formal presentation, are as noted below:

- *How does the funding become available?* Jeff responded that that there is an annual application process consisting of an application that needs to be filled out, which will be submitted for evaluation by a "yet-to-be identified" selection committee. The first application cycle is currently in effect, and applications are due by December 31st, 2006. Also, an entity can apply for funding during different application cycles (i.e. if you are successful the first time, there is nothing that precludes you from applying during subsequent cycles).

- *When will the SRTS workshop take place?* The workshop has not been scheduled, but will be at a time and place convenient for the teachers and the parents. (*Note subsequent scheduling by Evergreen PTO resulted in a workshop in the cafeteria at Evergreen School on November 13th, from 4 to 7 pm*).

- *How will we be able to use this study process?* If we come up with ideas, will the school district be mandated to implement them? The answer is that this process will benefit the school in a variety of ways. It will result in a community driven effort to try to improve student safety from many different approaches. Rather than a consultant coming in and telling the school what to do, the study process will result in a team effort looking at many different things. The study results should be viewed as a blueprint for the future vision. It doesn't mean that somebody has to run out and accomplish of the identified recommendations, however it gives the school and community something to strive for.

- *Who will run the pending workshop?* RPA (Jeff Key) will facilitate the "formal" workshop and help keep it on track. However all attendees will have a stake in participating. RPA will prepare and present the "engineering" component. If all goes well, this interactive workshop should take place over a three-four hour period and result in some consensus of desirable ways to improve student safety.

- *Will the workshop/study result in a published document?* Yes, it is envisioned that the results of this study, and workshop exercise, will result in a published, bound document that can be used by the community and school to supplement the SRTS application cycles and CTEP application process.

- *You referenced the CTEP program several times in your presentation.* Yes the CTEP program is a companion program that is very closely tied to the SRTS program. The one slide showed the similarity and differences between the two programs. It is encouraged to use multiple funding sources if possible.

- *O*ur streets need sidewalks and bike paths. Also, there is no street lighting in Evergreen.

- Speeds are way to fast on Evergreen Drive. Speed limit should be closer to 25 mph during school periods.

- Drainage is a problem on all of the streets in Evergreen. Very unsafe during freeze and thaw in the Spring.

- The police seem to sporadically do enforcement. Can they increase the enforcement in this area.

Evergreen Schools

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Study

Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

October 17th, 2006

6:30 p.m.

Evergreen Schools

Welcome & Introductions

- Robert Peccia & Associates
  - Consulting Engineers located in Helena and Kalispell
  - Working on "Kalispell Area Transportation Plan"
  - Completed "school safety analysis" at over 40 Schools in Montana
  - Jeff Key, P.E. (Project Manager)
- Montana Department of Transportation
  - Jim Lynch, MDT Director
  - Audrey Allums, MDT Safe Routes to School Program
- Other Parties
  - Gary Hall (Commissioner, Flathead County)
  - Kim Anderson (Principal - Evergreen Schools)
  - Linda DeVoe (Principal - East Evergreen Elementary School)
  - Darla Harmon (PTO / Evergreen Community Partners)

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Evergreen Schools

Purpose of Study

- Assess safety issues around the Evergreen Schools
- Apply a formal "Safe Routes to School" program - with assistance from the community
- Identify appropriate mechanisms to improve safety
  - Evaluation
  - Education
  - Encouragement
  - Engineering
  - Enforcement

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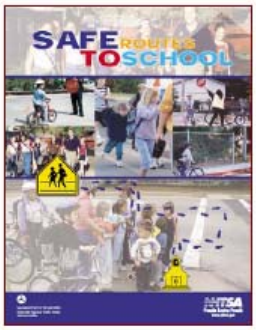
Evergreen Schools

What is the "Safe Routes to School" Program?

- Safe Routes to School Programs seek to make it safe, convenient, and fun for children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bike to school
- Facilitate projects and activities in the vicinity of schools that will:
  - Improve safety
  - Reduce traffic
  - Reduce air pollution
  - Reduce fuel consumption
  - Improve health, reduce risk of obesity
  - Encourage walking/biking to school
- Funding is for schools serving Kindergarten thru 8th grades.



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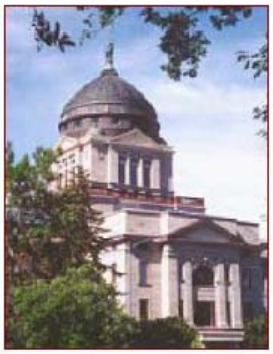
Evergreen Schools

Montana's Safe Routes to School Program

- Receives the minimum apportionment of $1 million annually.
- 70% to infrastructure, 30% to non-infrastructure.
- Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) also provides support to infrastructure.



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Evergreen Schools

Montana's Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP)

- CTEP funds transportation-related projects designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of Montana's intermodal transportation system.
- Currently, 56% of CTEP funding goes to bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Montana's SRTS program encourages communities to coordinate SRTS and CTEP funding for projects.

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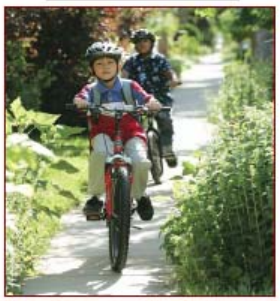
Evergreen Schools

What is the "Safe Routes to School" Program?

- MDT is responsible for the program in Montana
- MDT must provide a full-time SRTS Coordinator
  - Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies is contracted coordinator
- MDT has established a competitive SRTS application process
- The SRTS National Partnership brings together more than 200 diverse nonprofit organizations, government agencies, businesses, and professionals to advance the Safe Routes to School movement.
- The most successful programs incorporate the five E's:
  - Evaluation
  - Education
  - Encouragement
  - Engineering
  - Enforcement



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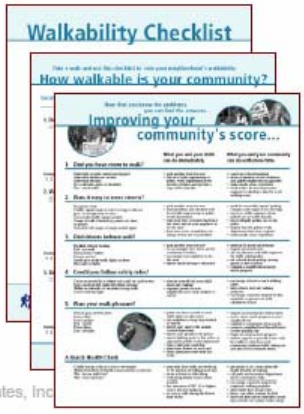
Evergreen Schools

SRTS - Evaluation

- Community assessments of walking/bicycling facilities and programs
- Survey parents and kids
- Tracking and performance monitoring



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SRTS - Education

- Teach kids about safe behaviors when walking and biking
- School curriculum covering transportation, health and environmental issues
- SRTS training

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Evergreen Schools

SRTS - Encouragement

- Walking School Bus/Bike Train
- Frequent Rider Miles
- Walk to School Day/Week
- Walking Punch Cards
- Media attention
- Public awareness campaigns

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Evergreen Schools

SRTS - Engineering

- Pedestrian and bicycle improvements
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
  - Sidewalks, trails, bike paths
- Crossing Improvements (Crosswalks)
- Secure bicycle parking facilities

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Evergreen Schools

SRTS - Enforcement

- Working with local police to enforce speed zones
- Crossing guards
- Helmet use enforcement
- Crosswalk enforcement
- Officer training

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Evergreen Schools

Who Should Be Involved?

- School administrators, teachers
- Parents, students, school nurses
- Law enforcement officers
- City engineers, planners, elected officials, traffic safety councils
- Bike and pedestrian advocates
- Neighborhood associations, business community, etc.

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Evergreen Schools

Steps in Creating a SRTS Plan

- Create your team
- Collect information
- Map routes
  - Aerial mapping
- Find solutions
- Develop a plan
- Fund the plan
- Act
- Evaluate and make changes if needed

Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.

Evergreen Schools

What is the Consultant Doing on the Project?

- RPA is completing the "Engineering" component on a "stand-alone" track
- Collecting data before and after school began to include:
  - Speeds
  - Volumes
  - Gaps in the traffic stream
  - Accident records
  - Personal interview
  - Assessment of infrastructure
  - Mapping/graphics

- RPA will also assist in facilitating the formal SRTS program
  - Kick-off meeting
  - Walkability / bikeability assessments
  - Work closely with PTO, School Officials & Local Law Enforcement
  - Facilitation

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Evergreen Schools

How Can I Become Involved?

- Fill out a comment sheet with your concerns and/or suggestions
- Visit with RPA and/or the PTO representative
- Email RPA's project manager at jeffk@rpa-hln.com
- Email the Evergreen Schools PTO representative at egcp@centurytel.net
- Participate in future SRTS workshops (to be announced)

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Evergreen Schools

Concluding Remarks

- This study is a positive step in improving safety around the Evergreen Schools
- The SRTS program results in a holistic approach to safety improvements. There is rarely a single solution.
- The SRTS program relies on a variety of expertise and consensus building exercises
- We want the community to become engaged during this study
- Questions and/or Comments???

THANKS FOR COMING!!!

Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.

Appendix B

- **Meeting Minutes (10/24/06)**

Kalispell Area Transportation Plan (2006 Update)

"Safe Routes to School" Outreach Activity Number 2
Evergreen Business Owners & Property Owners Association
(October 24th, 2006)

A public outreach activity was held on Tuesday, October 24th, 2006, for the "Safe Routes to School" study being developed for the Evergreen Schools. The meeting coincided with the regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the "Evergreen Business Owners & Property Owners Association". The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. and concluded at approximately 9:00 p.m. The meeting was held in the Community Room at the Evergreen Fire Hall and was attended by about 20 members of the community. Sign-in sheets were passed around, which recorded approximately 15 individuals, however it was estimated another 5 individuals (including the consultant team and others) did not sign-in.

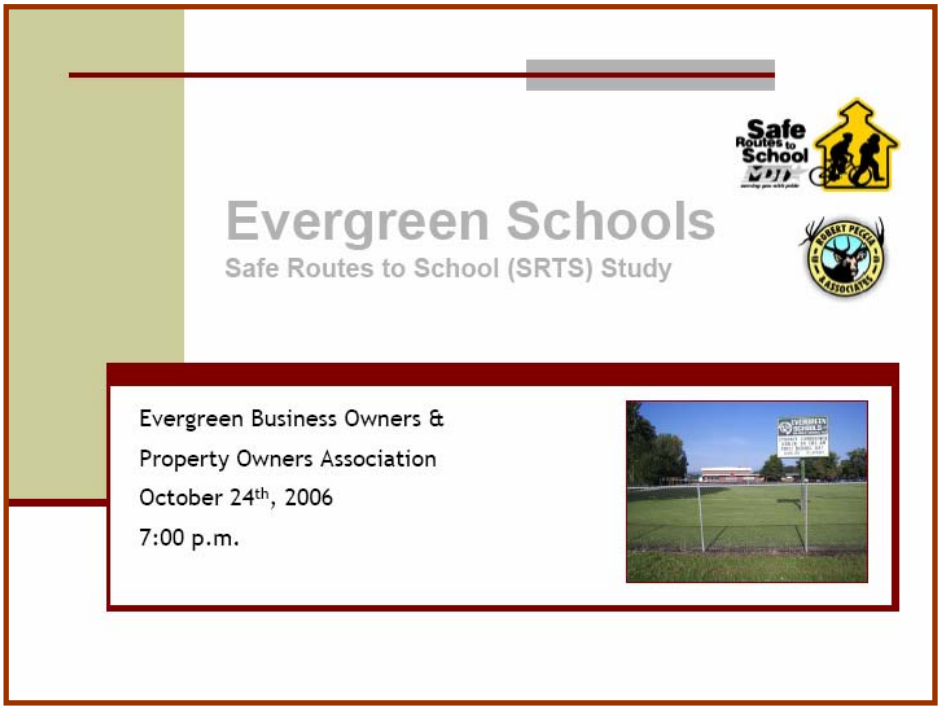
The meeting began with Darla Harmon making introductions and thanking people for attending. Darla is the Evergreen Community Partners Chairwoman, and has been an active advocate for this project. Ms. Harmon introduced the project before Jeff Key gave a formal presentation. Mr. Key proceeded with a formal power point presentation to the audience (included in these minutes at the end of the comment portion), followed by a "question and answer" session.

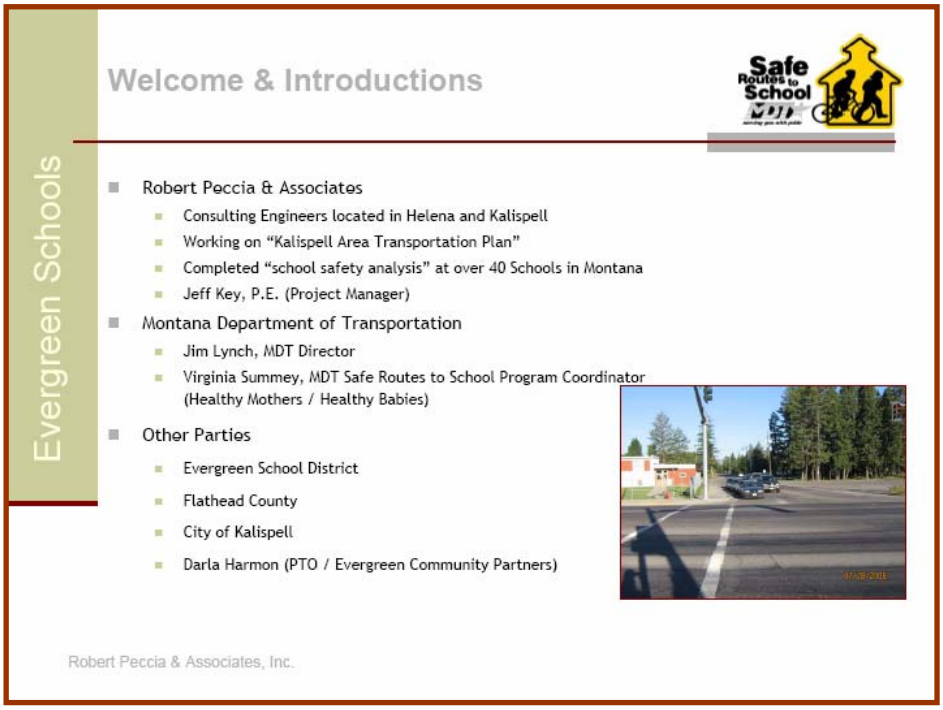
Issues and comments made from the meeting attendees, both during and after the formal presentation, are as noted below:

- The County does a horrible job of sanding the roadways in the winter. They are going to use pea gravel this winter, instead of sand. Somebody should show them how to do their job. With pea gravel, we are all sliding into icy intersections. We even slide through traffic lights.
- The school district no longer busses kids between the two schools. Why can't that start again to keep kids off of Evergreen Drive, and their parents can pick them up at the Elementary School, where there is more room.
- We need more speed control. LaSalle Road is 45 mph and is way too fast. Just listen to the traffic noise.
- We need sidewalks in the Evergreen community. There are no sidewalks, like the rest of Kalispell. How could this area develop over the years without sidewalks.
- You mentioned an application process in your presentation. If Evergreen Schools are the only application this funding cycle, do we get the entire $1 million dollars? How do we get all this money?
- Do the dollars come out of the school dollars? The school should be contributing to some of these safety issues, since their parents are the ones dropping the kids off and creating the traffic all over the place.

- Any available money through the SRTS program should be leveraged with other monies (i.e. the County, the School District, CTEP, should all be proportionate to a projects main purpose).

- Access to the new high school is important.





Evergreen Schools

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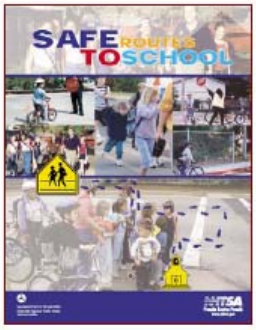

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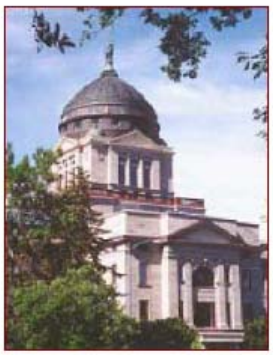

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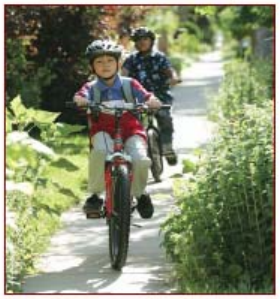

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Evergreen Schools

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Evergreen Schools

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- Questions and/or Comments???

THANKS FOR COMING!!!

Robert Peccia & Associates, Inc.

Appendix C

- **Meeting Minutes (11/13/06)**

Kalispell Area Transportation Plan (2006 Update)

"Safe Routes to School" Outreach Activity Number 3
Evergreen Schools Community Workshop
(November 13th, 2006)

A "Safe Routes to School" workshop was held the evening of Monday, November 13th, 2006, for the "Safe Routes to School" study being developed for the Evergreen Schools. The meeting was held in the Administration Building's gymnasium. The meeting began at 4:00 p.m. and concluded at approximately 7:30 p.m. The workshop was attended by about 30 members of the community. Sign-in sheets were passed around, which recorded 25 individuals, however it was estimated another 5 individuals did not sign-in.

The meeting began with Jeff Key asking participants to introduce themselves and relay what they hoped to accomplish at the workshop. This was followed by Mr. Key delivering a 30-minute presentation about the program, the SRTS process, and the purpose of the workshop (presentation attached herein). At that time, the participants were asked to break out into groups of three, four or five to brainstorm problem areas and ideas. Full size aerials and large flip chart paper was provided, along with markers, to record each groups ideas. As this occurred, the consultant team walked around the room and offered suggestions and/or answered questions.

At the conclusion of this brainstorming exercise, each group was asked to stand up in front of the crowd to explain their group's findings and recommendations. There were no "right or wrong" ideas, and the exercise was a positive one in that all participants were engaged and active throughout the workshop.

The workshop conclusion resulted in Mr. Key going around the room one last time one-by-one and asking participants that of all the ideas generated, what would be there top three priorities to improve student safety. The question was also posed as to whether their initial hopes and objectives stated at the beginning of the workshop had been met by the end of the workshop.

Workshop Prelude (Comments)

- Learn about the SRTS program;
- Want kids to get to and from school safely;
- Evergreen Drive is a huge issue;
- Address issues;
- Monitor safety around the schools;
- More kids to walk;
- Kids are unsafe – need strategy;
- Teach kids independence / education;
- Input on enforcement; and
- Bike travel.

Issues and comments made from the workshop participants, both during and after the formal presentation, are as noted below:

Group 1

- Left-turn arrows needed on LaSalle Road when turning onto East Evergreen Drive and West Evergreen Drive.
- At peak hours, left-turns are a problem.
- Speed on Helena Flats is a problem between MT-35 and Plentywood (posted at 35 mph). Also visibility problems and roadway width problems on Helena Flats Road.
- Sleepy Hollow neighborhood not served adequately & need paved shoulders on LaSalle Road.
- Three-way stop at Bernard and Reserve a problem.
- East Reserve Drive width is a serious issue, from Helena Flats Road all the way to LaSalle Road.
- Community wide, width of minor arterials and collectors is inadequate.
- Springcreek and Solberg – transition areas poor and bridge problematic.
- Crosswalk violators and/or more enforcement. Need more crossing guards.
- Street lighting in the Evergreen community in general is absent.
- Additional problem areas are: Shadow Lane (cars & kids); Helena Flats Road (truck traffic and speeds); and Shady Lane (Kids walking to Junior High and Elementary School).

Group 2

- The intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive is problematic and must be redesigned and reconstructed. This is the most important issue at the schools.
- Widen West Evergreen Drive.
- Need a crosswalk from Silver Shadow Estates across West Reserve Drive.
- Traffic calming improvements a great idea down East Evergreen Drive (with appropriate crosswalks).
- Need pedestrian path from Shady Lane, across Highway 35, running north to East Evergreen Drive.
- Would like to see some parental education and more parental involvement. Think the "walking school bus" is a great idea.
- Parent "volunteer" crossing guards are a great idea, or apply for grant money to fund on a temporary basis.
- "Safe houses" are a great idea and should be explored.
- Law enforcement – free ice cream cone coupons for "doing the right thing". Could coupons be funded with SRTS money?
- Adopt a sidewalk for maintenance (i.e. snow removal).
- Need street lighting throughout the area, not just at crosswalks.

Group 3

- Cottonwood – need push button crosswalk with a blinking light to warn and/or stop traffic.
- Highway 2 and Highway 35 intersection has no way for kids to cross – must be improved.

- Evergreen Drive and LaSalle Road intersection needs to be much larger. Need three lanes on both sides of Evergreen Drive (i.e. left, thru and right), with turn signals for all lefts.
- Need safer corners around the intersection of Evergreen Drive and LaSalle Road to prevent cars from jumping the curb line and sidewalks.
- Would be nice to have a better "pick-up" point for the kids to wait for their parents.
- Corner captains are a great idea.
- Two sided bike path until Birch, with a crossing guard. South from Highway 2 to Birch and north to Helena Flats – serves school population.
- Restructure parking lot to have an access off of West Evergreen Drive. Put current parking lot as new play area. Create new exit to LaSalle Road (right-out only).
- West Evergreen Drive has no crosswalk (s) anywhere along its length.
- Can we use student crossing guards (6^{th} grade and up?).
- Better signage and flashing lights for marked crossings and school zones.
- We could add some "safety pages" to the school website.
- Parent/community safety meetings – how to help increase student participation in walking and biking. Maybe do four times a year. Could put posters in Evergreen businesses to announce.
- Bicycle rodeo is a great idea.
- October 4^{th} should be set aside for a "Walk to School Day". Make signs and carry them to school. Get media attention and make it very visible.
- Incentives are great: frequent rider miles/frequent walking miles; walking school bus; and walking punch cards.
- "Cop in a box" – purchase 2 or 3 and put in high speed areas.
- Should have Fire and Police departments come into the schools to talk to kids about safety.
- Bresnan Cable has safety days.
- Meadow Gold milk containers have safety information on them occasionally.
- Flathead Electric has safety programs.

Group 4

- Left turn lanes are needed on Evergreen Drive at the intersection with LaSalle Road (on both sides).
- Vehicles cut the corners and drive up on the sidewalk at the intersection of LaSalle Road and Evergreen Drive.
- Need a bike path along West Evergreen Drive.
- Cottonwood and LaSalle Road – Volunteer Fire Department has at least three responses at this location this past year.
- There is increased truck traffic throughout the Evergreen area, especially at the Conrad Drive and Shady Lane 'bypass" created when the traffic signal went in.
- The Evergreen community needs street lights throughout the community on the major roadways.
- Need a crosswalk at the Meadow Manor area to the Boys and Girls Club
- Need some sort of path from MT 35, at Shady Lane, to the north through the residential area to Evergreen Schools.

- Reserve Drive has seen increased traffic over the years, resulting in conflict with pedestrians.

Group 5

- Helena Flats Road is too narrow and there is no room for pedestrians and bicycles.
- There is no path or sidewalk near Shady Lane and MT 35 for kids to use. There is a portion of the school students that live south of MT 35.
- We need a traffic signal at Helena Flats Road and MT 35.
- Need a flashing crosswalk light at Helena Flats Road and MT 35.
- LaSalle Road, north of Evergreen Drive, needs separated pedestrian facilities on the west side of the roadway. LaSalle Road, south of Evergreen Drive, needs separated pedestrian facilities on the east side of the roadway.
- West Evergreen Drive is too narrow.
- River Road is too narrow – need bike path.
- No crosswalks or sidewalks along Reserve Drive. It is too narrow, and traffic backs up on Reserve in both directions.

Group 6

- At the intersection of Highway 35 and East Cottonwood we need some type of barrier to slow traffic.
- Could there be a light or some sort of traffic calming device at the East Cottonwood intersection with Highway 35?
- The three-way stop at Birch and East Evergreen Drive is problematic due to sight distance issues.
- Bernard and East Evergreen Drive is also problematic.
- Kids use an informal path connecting South Mountain View Drive and Poplar Drive. Can we formalize this into something more permanent? I heard it is a waterfowl production area and is protected from any construction?
- Spring Creek to Edgewood/Solberg needs help. General car and safety issues exist with intersection alignment.

Group 7

- Reflectable clothing for fundraisers for the schools would be great (i.e. sweatshirts and hats).
- Street lighting is need throughout the Evergreen community.
- Need education programs about strangers and how to act in unfamiliar circumstances with strangers.
- Generally, need more sidewalks throughout the community.
- Need safe routes for the “kings way” loop.
- Extend paths to railroad. Is this active?
- New developments should provide lighted paths and sidewalks as part of their approval process.
- Widen bridge on East Evergreen Drive.
- Need turn lanes on Evergreen Drive (both sides) at LaSalle Road.

Priorities (as listed on group summary sheets)

- West Evergreen Drive (listed four times);
- East Evergreen Drive (listed three times);
- LaSalle Road / Evergreen Drive intersection;
- LaSalle Road / Cottonwood intersection;
- Shadow Estates;
- Parking at Evergreen Junior High School;
- Helena Flats Road;
- Area north of West Evergreen Drive;
- Shady Lane connection;
- Need some education programs; and
- Implementation will take time – start small and build momentum.

Workshop Powerpoint Presentation

Evergreen Schools

I. Welcome & Introductions

- Jeff Key, PE (Robert Peccia & Associates)
- Trisha Jensen (Robert Peccia & Associates)
- Virginia Summey (Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies)
- Darla Harmon (Evergreen Community Partners)
- Attendees

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Evergreen Schools

II. Purpose of Study

- Assess safety issues around the Evergreen Schools
- Apply a formal "Safe Routes to School" program - with assistance from the community
- Identify appropriate mechanisms to improve safety
  - Education
  - Encouragement
  - Engineering
  - Enforcement

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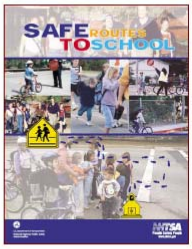
III. What is the "Safe Routes to School" Program?

- Safe Routes to School Programs seek to make it safe, convenient, and fun for children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bike to school
- Facilitate projects and activities in the vicinity of schools that will:
  - Improve safety
  - Reduce traffic
  - Reduce air pollution
  - Reduce fuel consumption
  - Improve health, reduce risk of obesity
  - Encourage walking/biking to school
- Funding is for schools serving Kindergarten thru 8th grades



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III. What is the "Safe Routes to School" Program?

- MDT is responsible for the program in Montana
- MDT must provide a full-time SRTS Coordinator
  - Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies is contracted coordinator
- MDT has established a competitive SRTS application process
- The most successful programs incorporate the four E's:
  - Education
  - Encouragement
  - Engineering
  - Enforcement

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Evergreen Schools
IV. National Statistics – What is the Problem?
Safe Routes to School
Barriers to walking and bicycling to school
Community Design
Safety
Time and Convenience
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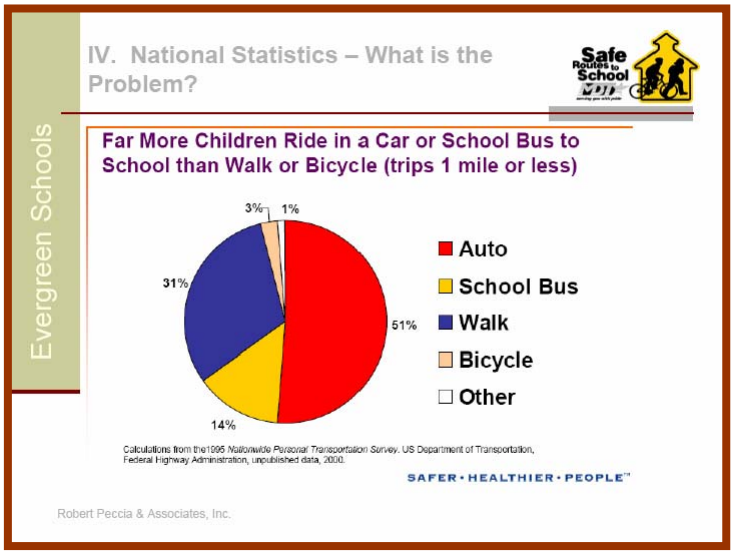
Evergreen Schools
IV. National Statistics – What is the Problem?
Safe Routes to School
Far More Children Ride in a Car or School Bus to School than Walk or Bicycle (trips 1 mile or less)
3%
1%
31%
51%
14%
Auto
School Bus
Walk
Bicycle
Other
Calculations from the1995 Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey. US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, unpublished data, 2000.
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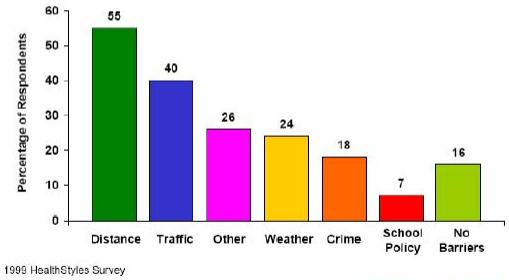
IV. National Statistics – What is the Problem?

Reported Barriers to Walking & Biking to School (1999)



1999 HealthStyles Survey

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IV. National Statistics – What is the Problem?

Children's Health Risks

Related to Physical Inactivity, Pedestrian Safety, and Air Quality

- Prevalence of **overweight** children has tripled.
- Sharp increase in cases of **type 2 diabetes** in children.
- **Pedestrian injuries** are the 3rd leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children.
- **Asthma** rates have increased 160% in the past 15 years in children.

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Evergreen Schools
IV. National Statistics – What is the Problem?
Safe Routes to School
Increased independence
Increased physical activity
Improved pedestrian skills
More social interaction
Many reasons to do a Walk and Bicycle to School program
Community design
Reduced fear of crime
Decreased neighborhood/ school traffic
Less reliance on automobile
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Evergreen Schools
IV. National Statistics – What is the Problem?
Safe Routes to School
Ways to Get Kids Walking and Bicycling to School
• Safe Routes to School
To identify and create safe routes to school for walking and bicycling
• Walking School Bus
To encourage children to walk to school in groups accompanied by adults
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V. What Do We Want to Accomplish Tonight?

- Help Create The Plan
- **Brainstorm !! Brainstorm !! Brainstorm!!**
- Mark up the aerials with ideas:
  - Barriers to student safety
  - Ideas for improving student safety
  - Focus on the E's

THERE ARE NO WRONG IDEAS

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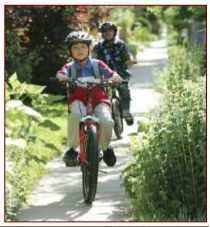
VI. Examples of the E's

- Education
- Encouragement
- Engineering
- Enforcement



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A. SRTS - Education

- Traffic Jeopardy (Grades 4-5)
- Active Lifestyle Challenge (Grades 3-5)
- Transportation Choices for the Environment (Grades 6-8)
- Mapping My Route to School (Grades 4-8)
- EcoPoints Score Card (Grades 5-8)
- EcoTravel Log (Grades 5-8)
- The Way to Work (Grades 6-10)
- Greenhouse in a Bottle (Grades 6-8)
- Helmet Safety / Travis's Story (Grades 4-5)
- Bicycle Rodeo (Grades 4-5)
- The Signs of Safety (Grades 3-4 + younger)
- STOP / LOOK / LISTEN (Grades 1-2)
- Walk Around the Block (Grades 1-2)

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B. SRTS - Encouragement

- Walking School Bus/Bike Train
- Frequent Rider Miles
- Walk to School Day/Week
- Walking Punch Cards
- Media attention
- Public awareness campaigns

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C. SRTS - Engineering

- Pedestrian and bicycle improvements
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities
  - Sidewalks, trails, bike paths
- Crossing Improvements (Crosswalks)
- Secure bicycle parking facilities

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D. SRTS - Enforcement

- Working with local police to enforce speed zones
- Crossing guards
- Helmet use enforcement
- Crosswalk enforcement
- Officer training
- Corner captains
- Paperwork patrol

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VII. Concluding Remarks

- Workshop participants to brainstorm ideas on the aerials & paper - "mark them up and write them down"!!
- Each table will present them to the group
- RPA will review and summarize findings into a memorandum to eventually be included in the Evergreen SRTS Study document.
- RPA will review for technical feasibility if needed.
- **THERE ARE NO WRONG IDEAS!!!**
- Draft SRTS study document will be available in early December for review and consideration

HAVE FUN!!!

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Appendix D

- **Parent Survey**

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PARENT SURVEY

(Your School) Elementary School

Dear Parents,

As a member of our school community, you may have heard about our development of a Safe Routes to School Program. This program will enable us to identify ideas for both educational (student education, parent education, community education, etc.) and physical improvements (sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic signals, etc.), in order to provide safer walking and bicycling conditions for our students. It is vital that we receive as much feedback as possible so that we can have a clear view of the improvements needed in order to make our community safe.
The purpose of this survey is to get your input on these matters. In order for the school traffic safety team to compile accurate results, we are asking for as many parents as possible to fill out the survey and return it or mail it to the school. You may be assured the complete confidentiality of your answers.

---

1. Please provide the gender, age and grade of each of your children attending our school.

Gender M F	Gender M F	Gender M F
Age _____	Age _____	Age _____
Grade _____	Grade _____	Grade _____

2. In your opinion, do you live within walking distance to the school? (circle one)

a. Yes
b. No

3. About how far do you live from the school? (circle closest answer)

a. 1/2 mile or less
b. 1/2 mile to a mile
c. between 1 and 1-1/2 miles
d. over 1-1/2 miles

4. How does/do your child/ren get to school in the morning? (circle one)

a. School Bus
b. Car
c. Car Pool
d. Walk
e. Bike
f. City Bus
g. Other (please list)_____

5. How does/do your child/ren get home in the afternoon? (circle one)

a. School Bus
b. Car
c. Car Pool
d. Walk
e. Bike
f. City Bus
g. Other (please list)_____

6. If your child/ren walk or bike to school, please list the primary streets they use to get to and from school.

List Streets: _____ _____ _____ _____

7. How do you feel about the following statements pertaining to the walking and biking conditions in your neighborhood? (Check one box per each question)

	SA Strongly Agree	**MA** Mildly Agree	**N** No Opinion	**MD** Mildly Disagree	**SD** Strongly Disagree
a. There are too many high-speed vehicles in my neighborhood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. There are high amounts of vehicle traffic in my neighborhood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. There are broken sidewalks in my neighborhood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. There are gaps in the sidewalk network in my neighborhood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. There is poor lighting in my neighborhood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. There is a crime problem within my neighborhood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. There are not enough crosswalks in my neighborhood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. There are not enough crossing guards in my neighborhood	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
i. It is dangerous to walk or bike to our school via sidewalks and roads.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j. I feel comfortable having my child/ren walk or bike to school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

k. Please write below any additional factors that describe your neighborhood's walking and biking conditions. Please list specific locations where poor conditions exist. Feel free to attach additional pages for your response as needed.

List Streets: _____ _____ _____ _____

8. Which of the following statements would influence your decision to consider letting your oldest child walk or bicycle to school? (Check one box per each question)

I would let my oldest child walk or bike to school:	Yes	No	Maybe
a. If they were accompanied by an adult.	☐	☐	☐
b. If they were accompanied by other children the same age.	☐	☐	☐
c. If they were accompanied by an older child.	☐	☐	☐
d. If new sidewalks and crossings were installed.	☐	☐	☐
e. If Police patrols and crossing guards were along school routes.	☐	☐	☐
f. If they received walking/bicycle safety education from the school.	☐	☐	☐
g. If we lived closer to the school.	☐	☐	☐

9. How important are the following factors in influencing your decision to allow your child to walk or bicycle to school? (Check one box per each question)

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
a. Crossing guards at all busy intersections.	☐	☐	☐
b. Continuous sidewalks from your house to the school.	☐	☐	☐
c. Clearly marked walking and bicycling routes (with signs).	☐	☐	☐
d. Separated trail connecting your neighborhood to the school.	☐	☐	☐
e. Slower traffic in the neighborhood.	☐	☐	☐
f. Better lighting.	☐	☐	☐
g. Emergency call boxes and designated safe houses (safer community).	☐	☐	☐
h. Increased Police presence in the neighborhood.	☐	☐	☐
i. Secure places to park bicycles (bike racks).	☐	☐	☐
j. School education programs on walking and biking safety.	☐	☐	☐

k. Please write below any additional factors that influence your decision to allow your child to walk or bicycle to school. Feel free to attach additional pages for your response as needed.

10. Traffic safety education programs are a primary component of the safe routes program. Below is a list of potential programs that could be developed at your school. Please check ones that you would like to learn more about.

a. ☐ The Walking School Bus (walking to /from school with an adult supervising a group of children).

b. ☐ Contacting parents and updating them on the Safe Routes Program.

c. ☐ Becoming an adult member of the School Traffic Safety Team.

d. ☐ **"**Safety Post" program, where parents or other adult volunteers remain present at various locations during AM and PM travel times.

e. ☐ Providing a "safe house" for children who may need assistance.

f. ☐ Help organize the "Walk Our Children to School" event.

g. ☐ Not interested in helping at this time, but would like updates.

h. ☐ Other, please list ideas below. Attach additional pages for your response as needed.

11. Please list below the nearest street intersection next to your home.

_____

Please provide your name and telephone or email address if you would like to be contacted about the volunteer opportunity you checked above. Hopefully you will be able to participate. To remain anonymous please leave this section blank.

Name _____ Telephone _____ E-mail _____